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RUSSIA'S PATIENCE

ON Thursday morning Soviet troops and aeroplanes began an attack on Finland. We live in a jungle: there is nothing we can do about Finland. Stalin's case, as stated publicly, runs somewhat as follows:

The Finnish nation, three million strong, continues to abuse its strength in a headlong career of aggression against Russia. Even Stalin has at last been goaded into announcing that his patience has been exhausted. Realising that all their previous provocations had failed to disturb the slumbers of gallant little Russia, the Finns last Sunday fired directly with their artillery into the Soviet lines before Leningrad, killing four men and wounding many more. This offence they have since aggravated by denying that any of their guns went off, even by accident. They have even ventured to propose a joint commission to inquire into this incident, for they allege that the guns that did fire were Russia's. But why speak of such trifles, when it is notorious that no less than two parties of Finnish troops lost their way on the uninhabited shores of the Arctic, and trespassed on Russian territory? Determined to give the soft answer that turns away wrath, M. Molotoff then required of the Finns that they should evacuate their fortified positions on the Karelian peninsula, and withdraw some 20 to 25 kilometres to the rear. To this conciliatory proposal the Finns replied with their customary insolence, by stipulating that any withdrawal should be mutual. The Russians then put themselves in the right before the judgment of the civilised world by instantly terminating their non-aggression pact with Finland. By common consent it is now their clear right to aggress, and this they are apparently preparing to do without culpable delay. As they justly observe, the conduct of the Finns exactly resembles that of the Poles in August, and is destined to bring on these " imperialists " a like fate.

With an acumen that cannot be too highly praised, the Russians have pierced all the disguises of British policy and discovered that it is supporting the Finnish militarists in their crimes against international law. This is the more reprehensible, since the Finns cannot possibly suspect, what we and the Russians know to be the case, that it is materially impossible through the closed Baltic for the British to help the victims of their ambition. Calumny reports that over 3,000 military planes are massed on the Russian side of the frontier. With a spontaneity that the Kremlin is wholly unable to check, mass-meetings of Russia's workers in all her factories are calling upon Stalin to execute the dictates of justice upon his aggressive neighbours.

When we drop irony, however, and look more closely into the motives of Stalin's aggression, the truth, strange though most British people will find it today, may be that he still fears a peace between Britain and the German General Staff leading to a combined attack on the U.S.S.R. In that case the strategic position of Leningrad might be a cause of genuine anxiety. It lies only twelve miles from the Finnish frontier, that is to say, within heavy artillery range. The Finns themselves cannot threaten anyone, but they may one day come, not for the first time, under German tutelage. Even this defence of Stalin's action is, however, ludiciously thin, since on this point the Finns have agreed to give way, in return for an equivalent area of Karelian territory. They are also ready to cede two or three of the little islands in the Gulf, which command the Russian naval fortress of Kronstadt. The real dispute centres on two further demands. (1) The Russians ask for the port of Hankö on the mainland, which the Finns refuse to cede. This may be for Russia an outpost against a German invasion. But has not Russia already secured all she needs for that purpose in the shape of naval and aeronautical stations on the Baltic Coasts ? (2) Russia demands from the Finns their ice-free port of Petsamo on the Arctic shores. She does not herself require a second such port in this region, since she has already Murmansk. But with this strip of barren land Russia would have a corridor leading eventually to Narvik, which serves both Norway and Sweden as an Atlantic port. The only defence for Stalin is that he tried vainly to co-operate with the West, still fears a combination against Russia, and has decided to pursue his own interests by methods now familiar in Europe and surprising only to those who had cherished the illusion that Soviet methods would never be those of national expansion and power politics.

Peace Aims

On the eve of the new parliamentary session Mr. Chamberlain broadcast a statement of the Allies' aims. His tone was resolute, but his sketch of the future was perhaps inevitably somewhat vague. Our one war aim is to " defeat the aggressive bullying mentality, which seeks to dominate other peoples by force and repudiates its pledged word whenever convenient." The peace aim is " to establish a new Europe." If any revision of frontiers should be necessary, it must be achieved by negotiation with neutral help. Some permanent international organisation should be set up, confined apparently to Europe ; but this will be a long and gradual process covering many years. What bulks largely in the Premier's mind is that the new Europe shall enjoy a fuller and freer flow of trade across its frontiers. Each nation should choose its own form of government ; finally, when aggression is banished, armaments would " be gradually dropped." In the House, Mr. Attlee complained of the vagueness of this " Utopian " sketch—to use the Premier's own adjective. But neither in Mr. Herbert Morrison's able broadcast this week, nor in Mr. Attlee's speech do we find much more precision. Of that we do not complain, because at this date no one can foresee what will be practicable. But though we do not ask for detail, we are entitled to ask for clarity of objective. The spokesmen of Labour rightly want a European Federation and agree that some surrender of sovereignty is necessary. But they talk of settling disputes between States by arbitration, which implies not Federation, but a League of separate States.

The Allied Reprisal

The British and French reprisal for the use of the magnetic mine, the embargo on German exports, takes effect only from Monday next. Neutrals have been placated in several ways, first by this delay ; then by conceding that goods containing German materials up to 25 per cent. in value may go free ; finally, by impounding these cargoes till the end of the war, instead of confiscating them. No protests have come from the United States or from Italy, but Japan has remonstrated with a good deal of vehemence, and has threatened counter-measures. Her case is that she urgently needs the machine-tools (is this a euphemism for guns ?) which she habitually imports from Germany. She claims, moreover, that she had received from the Ministry of Economic Warfare a pledge that no such action would be taken. The effect of this reprisal will be to cut off the foreign exchange that Germany derived from the Americas and Asia. This served to finance her costly purchases of contraband goods. The measure should, therefore, serve indirectly to tighten our blockade.

South Africa and " The Republic "

The latest news from South Africa indicates that General Hertzog and Dr. Malan are not finding it easy to reach agreement on terms for the amalgamation of their respective parties into a united Nationalist organisation. The chief difficulties arise over the attitude which the proposed new party is to take up on the question of Republicanism, and over the name. The latter difficulty has an important financial aspect, because the Malanites hold substantial funds bequeathed to them on condition that they retain the word " national " in their title. The Republican issue is much more fundamental. It appears to be taken for granted that there will be a declaration in favour of Republicanism in some form ; and the real question is whether the issue is to be put right in the forefront, or relegated to the background, of the programme. The two Central Committees having failed to agree upon a formula, this question has now been remitted for further discussion to a number of Provincial Committees. This is said to favour the moderates, who do not wish the issue to be made one of practical politics for the present. The probable outcome seems to be a formula which will leave the two groups free to put their several interpretations on the decision.

Rationing and Prices

Rationing is to come in on January 8th, and is to apply to butter and to bacon and ham. There is to be in addition a voluntary rationing of sugar, for which consumers are to register with their retailers, and, where possible, to limit their purchases to one pound per head per week. For both butter and bacon the permitted rations are very small. The butter allowance will have to be largely supplemented with margarine—which, in view of the improvement in its quality in recent years, will be no great hardship. For the breakfast rasher consumers will learn to substitute more fish, which they are encouraged

to do, or other kinds of meat where they are available. In view of the shortage of feeding stuffs, which will react on the poultry-keepers as well as on the pig-breeders, eggs are likely to be scarce as well as rashers. They are, indeed, already beyond the means of the majority of consumers. But egg-rationing presents serious difficulties, precisely because the consumption of eggs is largely a class privilege. The Government has in fact, despite the Labour Party's demands, kept rationing within the narrowest possible limits. Even so, there will be a substantial diversion of demand to unrationed foods, which will tend to rise sharply in price unless they are well controlled. We note in this connection that the Central Price Regulation Committee under the Prices of Goods Act has at last been set up, with Mr. Raymond Evershed as chairman and one Labour and one Co-operative representative among its members.

Mr. Keynes Retorts

Mr. Keynes, in Tuesday's *Times*, made a vigorous answer to the numerous critics of his compulsory savings scheme. These critics, he pointed out, had for the most part recognised the reality of the dilemma which he stated, attacked his scheme, and failed to put forward any alternative to it. It is manifest that, as Mr. Keynes says, the general body of consumers can only get such supplies as are available after the war services have taken their toll of the national production. If wages and other incomes are allowed to rise, the money thus put into circulation must cause a rise in prices somewhere, for it cannot be spent; and a rise of this sort is calculated to enrich the entrepreneurs at the expense of those who live on fixed incomes and also probably at the expense of the workers. If the workers try to avoid this by raising wage-rates as fast as prices rise, the effect must be to accentuate the tendency towards inflation. Therefore, Mr. Keynes argues, the workers will lose by not accepting his scheme; for even if their total earnings keep pace with rising prices, this will be only because they are in effect working overtime for nothing. He agrees that the scales which he originally proposed may be open to criticism, and offers a number of alternatives. He also announces that the calculations on which his plan is based are to be published in the December *Economic Journal*. In view of this fact, it is wise to await these details before passing judgment. Certainly, Mr. Keynes's reply has strengthened his original case; and his challenge to his critics to produce any other alternative to inflation demands an answer.

The Nation's Health

Sir Arthur MacNalty's annual report as Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health is once again reassuring. The birth-rate has risen once more, from 14.9 per 1,000 living in 1937 to 15.1 in 1938. Infant mortality has created a low record at 53 per 1,000, as compared with 58 in 1937. The crude death-rate has fallen from 12.4 to 11.6 per 1,000. These changes are not, of course, enough greatly to alter in themselves the general trends of population, or to prevent a decline in the near future; for that decline is unavoidable in view of the actual fall in the number of women of child-bearing age. They do, however, make the more pessimistic long-run forecasts look much less plausible than they appeared a few years ago. Moreover, the decline in maternal mortality has been maintained, the rate having fallen from 3.13 per 1,000 births in 1937 to 2.97 in 1938—another low record, though both maternal and infant mortality are still high in comparison with the rates in the States which show the best returns. Deaths from tuberculosis have again fallen sharply, and there has been another improved year in respect of notifiable infectious disease. In fact, all the evidence goes to show that Great Britain is entering this war in substantially better health than it possessed in 1914.

A Victory for Civil Liberties

The revised Defence Regulations which were laid before Parliament on Tuesday justify up to the hilt the public outcry against the original draft. At nearly every point which was the target of criticism the Regulations have been substantially altered. The power to order a curfew in any area remains with the Home Secretary; but though there has been no modification in this respect, the vesting of power in a Minister rather than in the military authorities at any rate secures that any actual use of the section will be subject to parliamentary discussion. The main points at which the new Regulations differ from the old relate to the power to make detention or restriction orders without trial, the limitations on the rights of propaganda and public meeting, press censorship, and the provisions dealing with "interference" with the movement of ships, vehicles, etc., which it was feared might be so used as to abrogate in many cases the right to strike. Detention or restriction orders can now be made only against persons of enemy origin or association, or persons against whom the Secretary of State has reasonable suspicion of acts prejudicial to public safety, and will be subject to appeal to an Advisory Committee. The anti-propaganda provisions are now limited to cases of false statements, documents or reports; and the regulation for restricting public meetings has been dropped. Compulsory press censorship has been narrowed to matters bearing on British relations with other countries; and the paragraph empowering the Court to prohibit an offender from publishing any newspaper has disappeared. Finally, there is a new proviso specifically preventing the use of Regulation 2 B against the exercise of the right to strike. The changes are far-reaching. This does not means that there is now no danger of the Regulations being abused; they still confer very extensive powers on the authorities. But consultation with representatives of the political parties has produced a salutary change of tone; and, if it is backed up by continued vigilance in and out of Parliament, it should be possible to safeguard essential popular liberties under the revised code.

CHRISTMAS BOOKS SUPPLEMENT

Next week's NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will contain a Christmas Book Supplement. Among the contributors will be: H. E. Bates, John Betjeman, T. S. Eliot, E. M. Forster, Rosamond Lehmann, Louis MacNeice, Arthur Marshall, H. W. Nevinson, Stephen Spender, Virginia Woolf.

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MAN-POWER AND PRODUCTION

ONE of the few advantages claimed for war is that it makes an end of unemployment. But here in Great Britain, after two months of actual war against a totalitarian enemy, we find that unemployment is actually on the increase. Though we have already absorbed into the armed forces upwards of a million men (to say nothing of the many thousands who are employed on A.R.P. or other emergency services) our unemployment totals show considerably more than a merely seasonal increase. The economists, headed by Mr. Keynes, are already at work calculating how much of our productive capacity we are in a position to divert in order to meet war demands, and how much sacrifice of habitual standards of living this division is likely to involve. But we are not in fact using anything like the whole of the productive resources of man-power and equipment that are available for meeting the double need. We are still letting men and machines stand idle, though already we are said to be spending on war services at the rate of £6 millions a day.

Why? Apologists of the Government will argue that at the beginning dislocation is unavoidable. Interruptions to shipping have caused shortages of materials and checked export trade: division of some factories to war orders has led to the shutting down of others which supplied their normal needs: the uncertain outlook has adversely affected the luxury trades; road restrictions have shut down the motor industry: building has been almost completely suspended, where it is not directly for war purposes: evacuation has thrown many out of work in the towns which have been largely emptied of their school-children and their wealthier adults.

All these causes have been at work, and they may explain the situation. But they do not excuse it. The fact is that war does not automatically abolish unemployment: in war, as in peace, positive action is called for to organise work for many people without it.

Hitler has boasted of Nazi Germany; "Our capital *is* our labour." Indeed, by any other standard than that of man-power abundant and highly skilled, Germany would be in no position to wage war. By comparison with Great Britain, she is desperately poor in everything except labour and organising skill. The Nazis, have made every possible effort to mobilise this man-power for the work of production. Long before the war began, unemployment in Germany had virtually ceased to exist as a problem; the problem was labour shortage. The Nazis were importing workers from Italy, from the Sudeten areas, and, by main force, from Czechoslovakia proper, to reinforce their capacity to labour. This labour was their capital—the very foundation of their economic, as well as of their military, strength.

For many months before war began, Great Britain too was supposed to be engaged upon intensive war-preparation. All the appearances were there — the outpouring of money on war services, creation of new Ministries and emergency departments, political speeches indicative of national determination. But nothing was done to ensure that the " hard core " of unemployment should be melted, or that jobs of importance should be in readiness for those whom war would be likely to deprive of their normal means of living. Vital as the maintenance of exports would plainly be to British ability to stand the strain of war, almost no thought seems to have been given to this part of the problem. Nor, when war did come, was any action taken, beyond mere exhortation, to arrest the contraction of normal industries until the expanding war services were equipped to absorb these surplus workers.

We cannot both eat our cake and have it. If we are to divert to war activities the very high proportion of our productive resources which the methods of modern warfare imply, it is of vital importance that we should raise our total production to the highest possible point, in order that we may have as much as possible left to meet the needs of the civil population. We cannot afford any unemployment, beyond the irreducible minimum of " fractional " unemployment while workers are changing jobs. It should have been intolerable in time of peace, in war it is manifest absurdity. Workers who were too old to hope for work yesterday are no longer too old to-day, when there is practically no one physically fit for labour who is not, or would not be with proper organisation, easily able to earn his keep. We ought already to be taking steps to bring into use that large reserve of women's labour which stood us in good stead between 1914 and 1918. We ought to be retraining the "long" unemployed from the depressed industries for work that is now needed, and to be adapting our methods of production to meet the available labour, instead of insisting that all the adaptation must come from the workers themselves.

Now that we are certain to go short and must keep imports not needed for war purposes down to the lowest possible point, it is plain folly to clamp down any sort of production until we require the resources employed in it for some more essential use. Building is a case in point. Shortage of timber is bound to restrict building to some extent; but that is no reason for artificially restricting it in other ways. It may be argued that economy is imperatively required; but it is not economy, but the very reverse from the standpoint of the nation, to refrain from spending so as to throw men and resources idle.

What is the moral? That our war effort is going wrong because it is still, in the main, simply an effort to secure war supplies for the Government, and not a planned attempt to set the nation to work. We are not suggesting that the British Government ought to adopt the Nazis' totalitarian methods. But we do hold that war makes clear what Socialists have always held, that profit to the capitalist cannot safely be made the criterion of what it is worth while to produce, and that capitalist industry cannot be regarded as doing its duty merely because it is meeting the demands of the service departments. In particular, we suggest two things—that the maintenance of our export trade is as important to us as the blockade of German exports, and that this aspect of wartime organisation ought to be in charge of a Minister with as wide powers and as influential a standing as the Minister of Economic Warfare or the Minister of Supply; and that, apart from food, which has a ministry of its own, the utilisation of unemployed man-power and capital equipment for the production of civilian supplies also needs special attention and a department with authority to look after it.

It is no good saying that, without any special measures,

our surplus man-power will all be employed within a few months, and the country crying out for more labour. Even so, we could ill afford to lose the services of a million and a half of workers, or to go on paying them for doing nothing, even for a few months. But it is in truth much more probable, if nothing is done, that unemployment will continue on a considerable scale even when the shortage of labour has become acute. The unemployed are not just so many labour units: they are individuals, in particular places, with particular qualities, needing particular measures in order to get them back into work. Last month, employment actually fell off, not only in London and the recently expanded South, but also in the Northern Division of England, in Scotland, and in Wales. This, in wartime, is merely absurd. It will mean, not that the war departments will moderate their demands, but that the general body of consumers will have to go unnecessarily short. The strength of Britain lies in the whole of its production and the work of all its citizens, not only in the quantity of its munitions.

MAGNETIC MINES

IN his broadcast speech of November 22nd, Sir John Simon said that the mines which are being sown in the North Sea are magnetic. We must, I think, assume that his statement was based on truth, as if false, it would have no marked value as propaganda. What is a magnetic mine? Certainly not a mine which is attracted towards a ship by magnetism. Here is the reason. The pole of a magnet is attracted with considerable force to a near object of steel, such as a ship. But the attractive force falls off as the square of the distance. What is more, a magnet has two poles, and if one is attracted, the other is repelled. Unless the magnet is very close indeed to the ship, the forces on the two poles nearly balance. On the other hand, just because the poles are forced in opposite directions, there is a quite marked torque, or turning force, on a magnet. An ordinary compass needle exerts an appreciable force to point towards the earth's nearest magnetic pole, but it has no measurable tendency to travel there, even when the resistance is very small, as when it is floating.

It is therefore almost certain that the magnetic mine, if it exists, takes advantage of the torque, not the attraction, exercised by a passing ship on a delicately poised magnetic needle or group of needles which forms part of the mine. Unless the whole mine is made of aluminium, copper, or some other non-ferrous metal, the magnetic detector must be on the outside of the mine, probably indeed on an arm projecting several feet out from it, as a magnetic compass has to be outside a ship. For a magnet inside an iron or steel container is effectively screened from magnetic fields outside it. That is why, for example, a submarine must have a gyrostatic compass.

A magnetic needle poised on a vertical axis, as in a compass, points roughly towards the magnetic pole in northern Canada. If it is poised on a horizontal axis its north pole tends to point in the same direction, that is to say, it dips. In either case a magnet in the neighbourhood will deflect it. And steel ships are magnetised. Some of the magnetism is permanent, and some of it is induced by the earth. Hence they cause very serious deflections of the compasses on their own decks. Indeed, even the old wooden ships had enough iron about them to do this, and Capt. Flinders, R.N., who discovered the fact in 1803, devised a method of compensating this deflection by means of iron bars which attracted the compass in the opposite direction. More exact methods are needed with steel ships, and their practice and theory were worked out in the nineteenth century.

In 1835, Capt. Johnson, R.N., showed that an iron ship actually affected the compass on another ship, and in fact laid the theoretical basis for the magnetic mine. In those days naval officers did a good deal more for the advancement of science than they do to-day, perhaps because to-day they are so occupied with "gadgets" that they lose sight of general principles.

I do not pretend to know just how a magnetic mine works. Presumably it lies on the bottom so that there is no wire to be caught by a mine-sweeper. The needle may point in a certain direction, and when the mine settles down it is perhaps coupled to some other moving part so that any further motion will close a circuit. More probably some more sophisticated means of detecting a charging magnetic field is employed. On the approach of a ship it may be exploded *in situ* on the bottom, or it may first rise to near the surface. The whole problem of its design bristles with difficulties. The torque exerted by a ship on a magnet varies inversely as the cube of the distance, and roughly as the amount of iron in the ship, though different ships may be differently magnetised. Suppose a mine lies at a depth of 100 feet, and is set off by a ship containing 1,000 tons of iron going just over it, it may be set off by a ship containing 8,000 tons passing 170 feet to one side, unless some very special device is present so that it will only respond to ships directly above it.

Nature, by the way, sets a limit to the depth at which such mines can be used, however big their charge of explosive. The earth's magnetic field varies. Some of this variation is slow, due to the movement of the magnetic poles. Some of it is rapid and irregular, due to magnetic storms which are caused by electrical discharges from the sun, and are associated with Northern Lights. If a magnetic mine were so sensitive as to work at a great distance from a ship, and therefore at a great depth, it would also be liable to be set off by changes in the earth's magnetism.

Mr. Churchill has stated that the best scientific brains of the country were at work on the problem of dealing with these mines. I do not believe that this is true. I suspect that these brains may be even less available than they were in 1914. Here are some of the reasons. As a result of the 1914–1918 war the fighting services developed scientific departments. Now a good scientist is invariably a man or woman who likes his or her job, and finds it interesting. The research problems provided by the Royal Air Force are interesting, and its Research Department contains some first-rate men. But the problems put up by the army and navy, in peace-time at least, rarely raise any new scientific principles. The man who will spend years in trying successfully to increase the life of a howitzer by 20 per cent. is not of the same type who makes very novel discoveries. He is an accurate and methodical person without the imagination needed to tackle an unexpected problem.

Apart from the permanent staffs, many of the men called in in an advisory capacity are too old. One who did excellent work in the last war retired from his university chair some years ago at the age of 65, but is still the principal adviser of one of the services on his subject. His brain is probably still quite good, but it is most unlikely that it works as rapidly in an emergency as it did twenty-five years ago, and speed is of the utmost importance in countering a new weapon.

One reason why more young men are not employed in responsible posts is that the present Cabinet includes no member who interests himself in the progress of science as, for example, the late Earl Balfour did. (I mention a Conservative because, though very far from being one myself, I do not wish to suggest that a genuine interest in science is appreciably commoner in the higher ranks of the Labour and Liberal parties than in the Conservative.) Hence those in authority do not even know the names of our best scientists under forty years of age, and it is they who are most likely to tackle new problems with the requisite speed and imagination.

What should be done? I believe the correct solution is one appropriate to a democracy. At the time of writing the navy has probably not yet got an intact magnetic mine. This

will not be easy. These mines very probably explode if they are moved, and a number of men may be killed before one is secured and its mechanism discovered. But this will doubtless be done. Perhaps a mine-laying aeroplane will be brought down on land or the mechanism of a mine fail to work.

Once the mechanism is known, I should like to see it fully described in *Nature* and the weekly engineering journals. This would give a chance for every physicist, chemist, or engineer to look for its weak point. And not only British scientists would be interested. At present these mines are being laid in the North Sea. They are a far greater menace to the shipping of Holland, Belgium, and Scandinavia than to our own; and scientists in these countries might help to protect their shipping. No doubt some very able British physicists are tackling the problem. No doubt most of the suggestions by amateurs would be ridiculous, and of the remainder most would already have been thought of. But among them all there might be one of real value.

This would be the democratic method of mobilising science to fight the magnetic mine. Mr. Churchill claims to be a democrat. It will be interesting to see if he adopts it. We must realise that, except at sea, this war is at present being fought mainly with political weapons. Later on it may be fought with scientific weapons. If so, we may very well lose it unless our scientists are properly used. This does not mean that teaching and research should be shut down and scientists mobilised under military discipline. They do not work well under such conditions. It does not mean secrecy, except where this is absolutely necessary. Secrecy is the negation of science. It means that initiative should be encouraged, and criticism permitted. Only under these conditions can science flourish in peace or in war.

These conditions are not fulfilled at present. The Government's whole policy on the home front is against their fulfilment. But unless they are realised it is entirely possible that the country of Newton and Darwin will lose the war on the scientific front.

J. B. S. HALDANE

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FRANCE AND THE WAR

I

HAVING been smashed up in a holiday accident, I had the perhaps original, but still unpleasant experience of spending the first few weeks of the war in a Glasgow bed. So when I arrived in Paris at the end of October, the place was new to me. No doubt, the streets looked much the same as before; and the strips of paper on the windows and the few sandbags here and there one just took for granted. The restaurants were crowded, and people were eating much the same food as usual; and there was none of the nervous tension I had observed in London the night before. Perhaps the difference between the merciless London black-out and the comparatively mild Paris black-out had something to do with this difference in nervous tension; or perhaps the French, who have more direct experience than we in these matters, had become more readily used to the idea that a war had started. I could, right then, have written a bright little descriptive piece about "Paris in Wartime"; but to get a little below the surface takes time these days. For how is one to get below the surface? Soon after getting here I took out my address book and proceeded to ring up all my French friends. With one or two exceptions, the replies fell into two categories. One was "No reply"; the other was: "Don't you know my husband (or son) is at the Front?" All, or nearly all, gone. Young Etienne Mantoux, who was studying for the Conseil d'Etat, gone; Barsalou of the *Dépêche de Toulouse* gone; little amateur-Trotzkyite Bénédite gone; Paul Nizan, that brilliant young novelist who resigned from the Communist party almost the very day the Hitler-Stalin pact was signed, gone; Alfred Silbert, my Croix de Feu pal, gone; dozens of others, all away. I liked Nizan particularly well for his great intellectual honesty; I remember how last June he said: "Our Governments are mishandling these Moscow talks; but, honestly, these Moscow chaps seem a mighty queer bunch; and I wish I knew what they were really up to." Sad to think that the youth of France, that hard-thinking youth (and what a lot of hard thinking they did these last years!) should all be at the Front to-day. The intellectual life of France (apart from gallant efforts to carry on some papers like *Esprit* and the *Nouveaux Cahiers*) is, more or less, at a standstill; and we have to rely for our spiritual food on M. André Maurois *de l'Académie Française* and M. André Chaumeix, also *de l'Académie*, and other old or elderly gentlemen of the before-the-last-war generation. In the meantime, *la jeunesse française* is over there, in the East, handling machine guns.

Down in my plebeian quarter it was much the same. The fat little ironmonger, with the goggles on his peaky nose, had vanished; so also had the greengrocer who was so much in love with his plump young wife. Funny how they used to giggle inanely when I would tell them the war was coming. Outside their little shop there is now the notice: "*Fermé. Patron mobilisé.*" The curly chap behind the counter at the *bureau de tabac*, gone—with a doddering old man in his place. His young wife was still there, and was taking it calmly: "Que voulez-vous? Il fallait en finir."

How often have I heard that phrase! No. France has not, as the German propagandists would have us believe, been dragged into the war against her will by the "British imperialists." At the time of Munich France was undecided, and division of opinion was profound. There was something tragic in the words one so often used to hear in those days: "We are not going to sacrifice *la jeunesse française* for Czechoslovakia." Now they all knew that it was no longer a question of Czechoslovakia or Poland; but that it was a question of existence, a matter of life and death for France herself. The alternative to war is vassalisation, as Giraudoux has pointed out so often; and practically everybody agrees. During the last two years, at more or less regular intervals of about six months, France had to carry out partial mobilisations, and had got sick and tired of this "war of nerves," which was upsetting all normal life, all economic activity, and was making life pretty unbearable. *Il faut en finir.* And they also say: "We don't want to share the fate of the Czechs. Isn't this enough as a war aim—to begin with?"

So the war is a lesser evil; but a fearful tragedy for France, for all that. All the manhood of France—or most of it—is in the Army, for God knows how long; intellectual life stagnant, or almost; so is the country's economic life, with millions of families living from hand to mouth, on their savings, or on the soldier's family's pittance of a shilling or so a day. No doubt many women are taking men's jobs; but life is not easy for anyone.

Talk about heroic war finance? Paul Reynaud is going to do what he can; but the difference between England and France must not be overlooked in these matters. On the face of it, Paris may be more "normal" than London; but business cannot be "as usual" in Paris, because most of the people are not there to carry on the business. Moreover, in 1914 there were enormous reserves of wealth which could continue to be spent at the Grands Magasins, or put into National Defence bonds. But to-day France has already gone through years of financial over-expenditure and monetary depreciation. Thanks to the skilful management by Paul Reynaud, it has been possible for France to lure gold back into the country, and to shut the trap with a bang the moment war was declared; so there is plenty of gold in the war chest; but, as things are, it will not be easy for M. Reynaud to raise his 79 milliards of taxation under next year's "ordinary budget"—not to mention all the money to be raised by loans for the financing of the war itself. Financial and economic liberalism will more and more be put in cold storage; and already industry is coming more and more under State control. The Government is fixing prices and the level of wages, and assumes the right to modify

collective agreements on its sole responsibility. There is some grumbling among the workers that all this State control and all this enormously heavy taxation is being exercised largely at their expense ; but time will show whether these complaints are justified. It may, however, already be said that there will be much less scope than in the last war for scandalous profiteering.

ALEXANDER WERTH

Paris, November 21st.

A LONDON DIARY

THE other day some officers of the R.A.F. gave a dinner to a German pilot who had been captured after playing a successful trick on his British opponents. According to reports, the German pilot broke down at the dinner, explaining that he had been told he would be tortured and executed after he had been captured by the brutal British. The story illustrates an aspect of the war which has long intrigued me and which seems to be left out of most theoretical calculations. H. G. Wells foresaw in *The Shape of Things to Come* a world put straight by the airmen deciding to get rid of these absurd national divisions—they look utterly absurd from the air—and imposing peace by agreement amongst themselves. Without looking so far ahead, I think we can already see a camaraderie and chivalry of the air. The men who fly above the clouds and fight like gods in the skies are likely to develop a knightly code of chivalry. The armed knight on horseback was beyond the reach of the ordinary peasant and consequently contemptuously ready to slaughter any number of them who got in his way ; they were all riff-raff, whether on his side or on the other. On the other hand, the knights who fought against him were in the same class, living under the same code and treated honourably when captured. So in present Europe I think the airman grows callous of the ordinary mortals whose cries cannot even reach him when he drops his bombs. In the long run he may mind very little what nationality they belong to. But he will respect his gallant opponent in the air and feel a bond of comradeship with him—especially if the riff-raff below gets out of hand. At the moment while the Nazis teach their airmen that the English will roast them alive, this aspect of the situation may not be very important, but in the long run it may prove crucial. Society is always shaped by technical facts, and the most important of these to-day is that machines are more powerful than masses. Shelley's, "we are many, they are few," is for the time irrelevant. To-day those who own and can manage the aeroplanes and the tanks rule ; no small country stands any chance, and the cry of defending "small nations" is either romanticism or hypocrisy. The next age will be one of centralised power. The individual cannot revolt and will therefore count for less, whether the victory nominally goes to Western imperialism, Hitler's racialism or Stalin's type of Socialism.

* * *

A new Reichstag trial is now expected. Whether the Nazis actually planted the bomb in the beer-hall at Munich as they started the fire in the Reichstag, I suppose we shall never know. If so, the technique is an advance on past occasions. Perhaps they feel that to have burnt another empty building would have aroused suspicions even in the minds of a docile population, while the violent deaths of a few unwanted old Nazis would be enough to remove suspicion. After all, all the important people had left the hall in good time and those who were killed or wounded were very early Nazis and as little wanted by Hitler to-day as the followers of Roehm. Harold Nicolson has pointed out how the Nazis, like ordinary criminals, give themselves away by repeating their tricks. Other obvious examples of a frame-up to sway public sentiment in a time of crisis are the Austrian coup and Dollfuss murder of 1934, the murder plot of June 30th, and the affair in which Herr von Papen was to be killed in Austria in 1936. Whether or no the Nazis actually planted the bomb, they are certainly making use of it on the Reichstag fire model. Instead of three Bulgarians and a German Communist with a half-witted Dutchman thrown in, on this occasion they have a German workman, also reputed to have been a Communist, who is said to have been conducted to the frontier so that he could be re-arrested, and who is to be charged with the ingenious crime of gradually over a period of months building up an infernal machine inside one of the pillars of the building. In 1933 Communists were the enemies on whose crimes Hitler was to come to power. To-day public enemy No. 1 is the British Empire. So we have two British subjects kidnapped on the Dutch frontier as proof that the British Secret Service were trying to murder Hitler. The Nazis now say that these two men built up an organisation which sabotaged ships belonging to the Anti-Comintern Powers during 1937-38 ; actually there were many outrages on ships during this year but most of them occurred on French and American ships, notably on the *Normandie*. Note too that Mr. Best and Captain Stevens were kidnapped on the day before the explosion, so that if their connection with it was the motive for their arrest, the Nazis must have had fore-knowledge of the plot. It seems clear that Mr. Best and Captain Stevens were lured to the frontier by the Gestapo, and that their only crime was to fall into a trap.

* * *

I happened to take away with me last week two books of reminiscences which make an interesting study in contrasts—L. S. Amery's *Days of Fresh Air* (Jarrolds, 15*s*.) and *Tomorrow is a New Day*, by Jennie Lee (Cresset Press, 8*s*. 6*d*.). Jennie Lee is a vital woman, but she is not at ease in her world : there lies the interest of her book. The daughter of a Fife miner—she describes her home life in the war years most vividly—she got a scholarship, first to the secondary school and then to Edinburgh University. Within three years of getting her degree she had won a by-election and become our youngest woman M.P. Since 1931 she has had to earn her living by journalism and lecture tours, with the inevitable result that the world to which she now belongs is not the mining community of Fife but the London intelligentsia. In this book she makes a pilgrimage back to the world of childhood and adolescence. But the magic is gone : the Socialist movement she knew then has lost its faith, its direction and its confidence in itself. Her problem is really *the* problem of Labour leadership in our epoch. Amery has none of these difficulties. His memories of mountaineering and travel all over the world are full of the exuberance and self-confidence of a man who accepts his own and his country's dominant position in society without question. The imperialism which he served, whatever its merits, was a reality ; the tradition of Harrow and All Souls and the *Times* was a system of values solidly based upon the class-structure of pre-1914 Britain. Amery is one of the vividest of our statesmen because he remains entirely true to this tradition : unlike Baldwin or Chamberlain, he will not gild the Old School Tie with sanctimonious talk. *Days of Fresh Air* is a brilliant book of good stories, and reminds us of a golden age when British Conservatives had principles, however misguided, and acted on them.

* * *

The funniest if not the most cheerful reading that has come my way this week is a passage in the Institute of British Photographers' Record. It describes an effort to obtain facilities for commercial photographers, beginning with a business-like letter sent to the War Office in September. To this there was no reply. Then follow these details of attempts to obtain information by telephone :

War Office :
Put on to Dept. 10.
Dept. 10 referred to Public Relations Officer.
Public Relations Officer to Dept. 56.
Dept. 56 to N.T.1.
Told no such department.
Back to 10 who confirmed N.T.1.
N.T.1 referred to M.I.1a.

M.I.1a stated matter was not responsibility of War Office. Home Office responsible.
Home Office:
Referred to Scotland Yard, Extension 57.
Scotland Yard:
Stated Home Office responsible. Police have no power to grant permits, have only orders to prevent photographs being taken of unauthorised objects.
Home Office:
Referred to War Office, but hearing that War Office deny responsibility, suggested Public Relations Officer, Home Office.
P.R.O. suggested Scotland Yard or Ministry of Information.
Ministry of Information:
War Office definitely responsible.

* * *

I commented the other day on the independence of the Church in the present war and called attention to the difference between the Archbishop of York's pronouncements on federation and the flamboyant imperialism that proceeded from ecclesiastical dignitaries in 1914. I now have in front of me a *Manual of Prayers for Wartime*, compiled by the Archbishop of York. Certainly the contrast is striking enough. Here are one or two extracts:

At times of self-satisfaction, self-seeking, and self-confidence; deliver us from evil.
At times of boastfulness over success or victory, of irritation at defeat, of despair at hope deferred; deliver us from evil.
That from national penitence may spring a new zeal for social justice.
That we may strive to love our enemies; may constantly suppress all wrath, clamour and bitterness; and may have our eyes opened to the way of peace and reconciliation.
That we may show charity and sympathy towards all innocent aliens among us; and may be restrained from all violence and injustice.

These are typical extracts; they are certainly more Christian than the appeals to God to give us victory and so forth, which resounded from the altars in the last war.

* * *

I stood astonished. It was long after black-out time. The rest of the street was decorously dark. Very few chinks of light shone between the blinds and curtains and blankets and bits of paper and rag and linoleum which the inhabitants of the Borough of Holborn use to darken their windows, showing thereby their sense of communal responsibility, their respect for orders and their recognition of the fact of war. And yet broad and brilliant across the path in front of me lay a shaft of light. One could have read by it. What would happen to discipline, to the nation's war effort, to Britain and civilisation if this kind of thing were allowed? What impudence, what effrontery! Where were the air-raid wardens? Was no one to be arrested or even rebuked? Muttering something about anarchy and German spies, I walked into the light itself and found myself looking up at the bland, shameless face of the Moon, shining down on me and the rest of mankind for all the world as if she did not care whether there was a war on or not.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. W. L. Prentice.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

"He was generally worried about the state of the world and was not so optimistic as he should have been," added the doctor.—Report of an Inquest in *Sunday Times*.

Mr. A. P. Boissier, who has just been appointed Headmaster of Harrow . . . explained. "We are a conservative school and I am a conservative man. I see no necessity for any important changes. Times may change, conditions may change, but the schoolboy remains the same for ever." Thus has the zealot of 1919 mellowed with the years.—*Sunday Times*.

Last Sunday we wrote, as it happened, some sentences that will bear repitition.—J. L. Garvin in the *Observer*.

20,000 Members. Those who love their Country MUST join the "Right" Book Club. ENROL AT ONCE.—Advert. in the *Sunday Times*.

An Anti-Enemy Prayer Meeting at 11 a.m. to-morrow (Saturday) at 5 St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh. "For HE must reign, etc.," I Cor., xv, 57.—Advert. in the *Scotsman*.

Councillor Lieut.-Col. A. A. Soames thought the money the soldiers received was sufficient. Their aim should be to win the war. "Don't hurl money at them and make them so rich that they will be content to lie in their beds and do nothing," he said. "Don't be sorry for the soldiers. They are the lucky ones. Those of us who are too old have to sit at home, doing nothing. The soldier at the front is enjoying himself. Money is not everything. They are there to win the war."—*Essex Weekly News*.

ANTI-HAPPINESS

"THERE is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy," said Stevenson. To many people the sentence is a proof of Stevenson's shallowness. Happiness has never been popular in the right circles.

Take two novelists of equal ability, for example, one of whom portrays life as mainly misery and the other of whom portrays life as mainly happiness, and consider the different receptions their books will get. The first groans over the fate of his hero from the moment of birth—groans over his having been brought up amid the horrors of a religious home, having been unpopular at school, having had to work for a living under a wolfish employer, having been lured into marriage by an ugly siren who ultimately ran away from him with a baker, having fallen in love with and loathed and left a series of extremely beautiful sirens, and having ultimately committed suicide with the word "Lousy" on his lips. You can see at once that this is a book to be taken seriously, that the author is a man who knows about life, that he has written something little short of a masterpiece. Consider, on the other hand, the story written by the more cheerful author—the story of a boy who was brought up amid the joys of a religious home, who was happy at school, captained the cricket eleven and in the key match of the year scored a century and performed the hat-trick twice, who got a good job under employers of the type of the Brothers Cheeryble, who married an angel and lived with her, adoring and adored, till he died at the age of eighty leaving £70,000 to a large family of children ranging in age from fifty to sixty—who, in fact, never did anything worth writing about. Can you imagine anyone taking such a book seriously? The obvious adjective to use about it is "escapist." Clearly, the novelist either knows nothing about life, or is deliberately lying about life in the hope of becoming a best seller. Happy books of this kind are a sin against the dark. They lack the integrity of misery.

It is not only in the best literary circles, however, that happiness is unpopular. The best philosophers are equally opposed to it. Zeno to most of us seems a profounder philosopher than Epicurus. The word "Stoic" has a noble ring about it. Yet you will remember that in your childhood, when your nurse called you a young Stoic, it was always on some occasion on which you had been perfectly miserable—sitting in a dentist's chair, for example, and suppressing the howl that nature longed to utter. Never did any nurse, as she gazed on the shining morning face of her infant charge, cry out applaudingly, "You young Epicurean!" The word "Epicurean" has never entered into democratic speech. The word "Stoic" has. From this we may see how low is the esteem in which the virtue of happiness is held.

I am myself in two minds about happiness. Much as I like to be happy and to see other people happy, I cannot make a hero of anyone whose aim in life is to be happy. I pursue happiness, but the pursuit of happiness seems to me rather contemptible. For one thing, the people who pursue happiness never seem to know what happiness means. They imagine it either as a lotus-eater's avoidance of three-quarters of the things that make life interesting or as the recurrent indulgence of an insatiable greed. In both cases, they usually

end as pessimists. Happiness may be a duty, but to make it the chief duty is one of the surest ways of missing it. I set out, however, to write a defence of happiness, not an attack on it, and these are saturnine thoughts.

The occasion of the defence was a conversation—or rather a monologue—of Herr Hitler's reported in the *Sunday Express*. Here, it was evident, was a man who had never even begun to realise that, whether it is a duty to be happy or not, it is one of the first duties of a statesman to make other people happy. There are crises at which he may have to call on other people to make sacrifices, but the object of these is to make an end of the crises, so that people may get back to their happiness. When Garibaldi offered his fellow countrymen, not rewards, but peril, wounds and death, he was not idealising peril, wounds and death as good things in themselves, nor did he dream of a free Italy as a country in which peril, wounds and death would be multiplied. The object of every normal revolution is to get the revolution over and done with so that the ordinary man may get back to a well-cooked meal with his wife and children. Revolution is not an end in itself, but is merely a road—a road paved with spikes—to happiness.

Originally, I imagine, Herr Hitler came into power because a large number of persons believed that his revolution was going to make them happy. Rich industrialists thought that he was going to save them from the Communists so that life would soon become one long Ascot Week. Small shopkeepers thought that he was going to save them from the Jews and that it would not be long till, rid of their most energetic rivals, they had doubled their fortunes. Patriots thought that he was going to enable their country to hold up its head again as an equal among the nations of Europe and that, having thrown off the shackles of Versailles, they would thereafter enjoy the happiness of feeling free. If Hitler had told his countrymen at the outset: "I will never allow you to be happy. Even after I have made Germany free, I mean to keep you miserable in a miserable Europe as long as I live," most of his followers would, I am sure, have deserted him. Field-Marshal Goering almost certainly would. Field-Marshal Goering looks as if he had some inkling of what happiness is. Herr Hitler does not.

Perhaps that is the secret of his political creed and behaviour. A gift for happiness, even if it is only for self-indulgence, seems to me to be one of the first essentials in a political leader. Unhappy men can write good poetry, but you cannot trust them in politics. Self-tortured, they torture others without a qualm. A man indifferent to food, drink and tobacco cannot understand the part—not only the sensual but the sacramental part—these things play in the lives of ordinary human beings. How can a statesman be expected to want to make his people happy if he has not the faintest conception of what this means? I have a friend who goes so far as to say that no man who is not married ought to be allowed to become Prime Minister. I almost agree with him. A political leader in the modern world should be a man who shares the experiences of ordinary men. He should certainly share some of their happinesses.

Whether the happiness of the people should be the chief aim of politics is a disputed point. No one seems to think much of a populace pampered with bread and circuses. The ideal State, we tell ourselves, would be a State whose object it was to produce, not merely well-fed and well-entertained citizens, but noble citizens. At the same time, I think there is a lot to be said for the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and happiness begins, though it does not end, in the stomach. Guns are good but butter is better, says the thinning man. And I hold that a statesman should provide his people with butter, not only before guns, but before philosophy. The ordinary man needs to have dined fairly well in order to enjoy the self-denying wisdom of Epictetus. There is always this to be said, too, for making people happy—that it is one of the few things a modern statesman can certainly do. With the wealth-producing inventions of modern times, he can provide every citizen with the first essentials of happiness—a comfortable home, good food and good clothes. Add to these things freedom—freedom to do everything that does not interfere with other people's freedom. After that pile on the philosophy as much as you like for life without either religion or philosophy is at best merely a variety entertainment. But, in politics, the A.B.C. of happiness must come first. The greatest statesman of the post-war world will be he who achieves it for the greatest number of his people.

Of Herr Hitler it can only be said that no modern statesman has reduced the level of happiness in Europe to the extent to which he has done. He has left his people tongues, but not to talk with. He has left them ears, but not to listen with. And this he calls making Germany free. He has marched into country after country, and there is not a country into which he has marched in which you will not find happiness dethroned and misery with its death's-head grin seated in its place. Yet, with a tiny alteration in his brain-cells or his heart or his nervous system, what a Europe he might have made or help to make! Those two magic words—Nationalism and Socialism—how they might have been used as an Open Sesame into universal happiness! Hitler, however, was a man who did not know how to be happy or to make other people happy. That is his tragedy and the tragedy of our times. Y. Y.

WAR ECONOMY

Now England has pooled her resources
And the national effort directs,
While her children join up with the forces
With the *élan* that England expects,
Not all can be marching a drilling
But all can show *esprit de corps*—
We others are cheerful and willing
But we cannot get into the war.

We can help by not showing resistance
To authoritarian control,
Till all are on public assistance
Excepting for those on the dole;
We can help in the nation's endeavour
By enrolling as never before—
But the lists are all full up for ever,
So we cannot get into the war.
We can help by an effort concerted

In directions officially shown
Till everyone's debts are converted
For investment in Government Loan,
For the finding of millions and millions,
And billions and trillions more
Is the only job left for civilians
Who cannot get into the war.

No tittle our firmness relaxes
Till justice (with peace) we restore—
But we can't raise the cash for the taxes
If we cannot get into the war.

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

FOR THIS RELIEF . . . MUCH THANKS

THE declaration of War put an end to my job. With one exception, a typist, the staff were given a week's notice. It was tiresome, but, considering that most of the firm's clients were German, not unexpected. And I remember saying to a colleague over a farewell bitter: "Anyhow, no able-bodied man need starve in wartime. There's always the Army."

Having more than a nodding acquaintance with five languages, having served on the staff of three National newspapers,

and having commanded a battery of Field Artillery during the last War, signposts seemed to point towards the Ministry of Information or the Censor's department. Application was duly made on 8th September, and the reply, received on the 21st, stated that my letter had been referred to the Ministry of Labour. A telephone inquiry elicited the fact that enrolment in the Central Register was a *sine-qua-non* of Government employment. Enrolment was effected on 25th October.

Meanwhile it was plain that nothing was to be had from Fleet Street, from publicity agencies or the advertising world. For various reasons my reserves were of the slenderest and, for the first time, weekly payments for my flatlet fell into arrears. Things began to look pretty grim.

There was not time to wait for a commission to materialise from the Officers Emergency Reserve.

Attempts, uniformly unsuccessful, were made to achieve the A.F.S., the Security Police, Margarine packing, and a temporary clerkship at the R.A.F. records office.

Having observed that

my courage
my cheerfulness
my resolution

would bring Victory to Mr. Chamberlain, and being far from certain that Mr. Chamberlain's idea of victory was parallel with my own, there was not much enthusiasm for the Army, but the Army was a life one knew.

Headquarters of a reserve (Home Defence) Battalion received my coy advances with cordiality. They had two Lieutenant-Colonels serving in the ranks and welcomed ex-officers. That seemed to put a period to immediate difficulties. All one had to do was to go to a recruiting depot and be attested. As it fell out, the recruiting sergeant who filled in my form was once a Number One in my old Battery. It was agreeable to be treated as a Blucher arriving in the nick of time to guarantee that victory for Mr. Chamberlain. But only for a moment. The Ministry of Labour representative discovered that journalism was a reserved occupation, and, worse still, that I had been registered at Montague House.

He turned me down.

A kindly official at Montague House suggested registration at my local Labour Exchange. He was certain that there was a plethora of temporary clerkships. I duly registered. It is pleasant to pay a very sincere tribute to the sympathy and humanity displayed by the Supervisor of that Exchange.

Mine was a case for assistance he said. There was nothing to be ashamed of. I had paid my taxes and could show the receipts, my bankbook was available, there were documentary proofs of my *bona fides*. He sent me post haste to the Unemployment Assistance Board. In the interim the question of rent had become acute and ejection was imminent.

The Unemployment Assistance Board pushed all applicants into a cellar on arrival. There was a wealth of interesting and unprintable opinion scrabbled upon the walls, none of it very favourable to the board. There was also plenty of time in which to study it, for I arrived at 11 a.m. and my case was taken at 3 p.m. Having submitted to a questionnaire, verbal and written, at the hands of a professionally sceptical civil servant (why " civil " ?) I was told that my house would be visited and the information checked. That night the landlord's patience became exhausted and a decree of eviction was pronounced.

On the following day I went back to the U.A.B. It was less crowded, so they got round to my case within three hours. I explained that without money I would be unable to find new rooms and that a domiciliary visit would be fruitless at the old address, because I should not be there.

Eventually my card was returned with the marking : " No allowance payable to you pending house visit."

The clerk who returned it was not the same one who conducted the earlier interview and my protest was met with : " I'm only a junior, I don't make the decisions." A request to see his senior was refused.

A friend came to the rescue and made it possible to find another room elsewhere in the neighbourhood. The U.A.B. were duly notified of the change by postcard. The week-end passed without any visit. On Tuesday I returned to the charge egged on by the Supervisor of the Exchange. This time the interviewer immediately took the offensive.

The change of address was it seemed a major offence. The valuable time of Government officials had been wasted on a domiciliary visit to the address I had just left. Useless to explain that the sole purpose of my last visit was to avert such a disaster. I was told flatly that " Government business was not done that way."

Apparently the postcard did not count. The new address had to be filled in on a prescribed form. It was.

That was a week ago. Since then I have called again to be told that there are 700 cases to deal with and my turn will come. Perhaps it will. Meanwhile one begins more and more to realise the bitterness which underlies those scrabbled obscenities on the walls.

My courage, my cheerfulness and my resolution are tempered by the thought of two acquaintances. One is the heir to a plum—£100,000. The other springs from a plutocratic house, newly ennobled. Both ornament the Censor's department. Both implement substantial allowances with substantial salaries, neither has previously served his country, both are so spared the inconvenience of serving it in uniform. Both went to the same school. R. G.

GAS-PROOF ROOM

THIS was a stable once, a Morland stable
Where horses' rounded rumps in shiny row
Set patient faces chumping at the manger,
Large, tired, and sage,
Deserving, having earned, their supper-wage.

Here was a natural repose; no danger,
No sudden menace from a hostile sky.
Only the ordinary daily slow
Trudging from stable back again to stable
Where ring-doves hung within their wicker cage.

I took these stalls, and made as I was able
A room, a room of beauty as I thought;
Filled it with books, and on a lapis table
Set flowers grown at home, not richly-bought.

I once esteemed the stable straitly ranged;
I next esteemed the elegantly changed
Stalls into library and found my peace
Fulfilled with great increase
And modest aim.
Both these I loved, the stable and the room,
Each with its own particular design
Sharp to its use, and fine.
I loved the country use, the horse, the groom,
Yet put the bookshelves back, where Horace Walpole came.

Both these I loved. Now in a darkened night
Stable and elegance alike are lost,
Both gone at necessary cost,
Morland and Walpole left as precious name.

Different things have blotted out their light,
Different things opposed to all the dear
Most valuable steady strength I hold,
Most English and most near.
Elizabeth came here
And in this gas-proof room received a cup of gold.

Gibbon came here and raged against the mud
For three long months of sticky Kentish weald,
A young militiaman, who'd not yet seen
Visions of ruins and the spirted blood
In greater tragedy on Roman field.

These three fine visitors I proudly hold
As predecessors in my small demesne,
Walpole and Gibbon and Elizabeth
Shouting "God's death!"
Great gossip, great historian, and great queen.

This room becomes a curious palimpsest
Finally written by a modern pen.
These shrouded windows and these curtained doors,
When will they let the sunlight in again?
Is *this* what I must make of such bequest,
A hiding-hole for men from other men?

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

NEW RUSSIAN MUSIC

IN the extraordinary situation in which Europeans find themselves to-day they are compelled to have recourse to the strangest methods of maintaining some sort of cultural interchange. But the whole machinery of this interchange has become exclusively political. Countries at war are naturally unable to communicate with each other through any form of artistic co-operation; but even where no state of war exists—as with England and Russia—there has been a cessation of cultural communication for more than twenty years. It was ostensibly to bridge this hiatus that the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. was formed. Nobody in their senses could deny that some effort to bridge the gulf was desirable, but when one looks back upon the results achieved by this Society since its formation they present a rather dismal aspect. I am unaware whether any similar Society exists in Russia to make known English cultural achievements to the Russians, but I suspect not. This, however, only makes the efforts on behalf of Russian culture by the English society more laudable and disinterested. If our English love of Russia is not reciprocated one can remember the ironic words of Heine:

Ein Jungling liebt ein Mädchen
Das hat einen andern erwält,
Der andere liebt eine andere
Und hat sich mit dieser vermählt.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the English had nothing in the way of artistic achievements to offer to Russia; but one might very well fear that our contemporary achievements would not make a very deep impression. It is probably, therefore, fortunate for us if no similar Society to that of the S.C.R. with the U.S.S.R. is functioning in Moscow. The Russians undoubtedly must have more faith in themselves or—what amounts to much the same thing—be less critical of their productions. I say this after being present at the Academy Cinema in Oxford Street last Sunday afternoon by invitation of the S.C.R. to hear a programme of "New Soviet Symphonic Recordings" consisting of a "Song of Jubilation" by Veprik, played by the State Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., conducted by A. M. Gouk, and a new symphony composed last year by Shostakovich, which has already been performed—so I am informed—hundreds of times in Russia. This is also recorded as played by the U.S.S.R. State orchestra, conducted by T. Mravinsky, "winner of the All-Union Contest for Conductors, 1938."

About Veprik's "Song of Jubilation" little needs to be said. It is the sort of thing that might have been composed by the late Sir Alexander Mackenzie using English folk material instead of the Russian used by Veprik. It is lively commonplace music rather cheaper and less intellectual than a similar production by Mackenzie would have been. But I imagine Russian musicians and critics do not expect us to be thrilled by M. Veprik. Certainly it is Shostakovich whom our Anglo-Russian cultural enthusiasts admire and wish us to regard as an example of the musical culture of the U.S.S.R.

Shostakovich's symphony has four movements which are marked respectively (1) Moderato, (2) Allegretto, (3) Largo, (4) Allegro non troppo. In spite of Beethoven's remarks on the futility of such conventional markings, I think Shostakovich has done well to retain them. To be original only in one's titles or directions is the fate of most deliberately iconoclastic artists and one feels that it is a sign that Shostakovich is a real musician and not a charlatan when he avoids such cheap devices. Unfortunately the symphony is disappointing. The first movement begins with a rhapsodic song-like theme which promises well and is followed by a march-like section after which there is a return to the first section, but more plaintive in character. It is curious that the opening and conclusion of this movement are more in the German than the Russian style. The second movement, a lively *Allegretto*, is a complete surprise. It suggests that Shostakovich is an ardent admirer of the Strauss family. It has a Viennese operatic character and is thoroughly conventional and bright. The third movement, *Largo*, is very weak and is rather like thin and sentimental Tchaikovsky in his worst moments. It is lyrical but has no positive beauty or invention, but merely that sort of vague sentiment characteristic of uninspired composers when writing slow movements intended to be of an emotional character. The finale *Allegro non troppo* is no better; it is made of rubbishy musical material and is thoroughly eclectic with echoes of both Tchaikovsky and Richard Strauss.

If this symphony had been composed by William Walton I should have said that this talented composer had gone completely to seed, and it is very depressing to find that Russia, in spite of all its munificent State aid to musicians and composers, cannot produce anything better than this after a generation of subsidised effort.

The film recording was clear enough to enable one to judge the music, but I cannot pretend that the actual sounds which come to our ears through this medium are particularly grateful. Every nation in these times of exacerbated and feverish national consciousness tends to over-rate its own artistic productions; but music, being one of the arts which does not have to suffer by translation, has the minimum possible of purely national characteristics and, writing as a European, I regret that it does not seem as if the world of music is being much enriched by the subsidised musicians of Russia. Why is this? There can be no doubt of the soundness of the policy of State aid to the arts and artists. The commercial attitude to the arts of the so-called Democracies is quite indefensible and must be changed. If Russia, however, is not fulfilling hopes founded upon its more enlightened attitude in this respect I suggest that possibly it may be due to its self-imposed isolation. The great periods of artistic creativeness have usually followed an interchange between different cultures. Standardisation and isolation are factors making for sterility and mere subsidising will never be a substitute for cross-fertilisation in the arts.

W. J. TURNER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Les Ballets Trois Arts, at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith
Ballets Rambert, at the Duchess

In this short paragraph we can barely call attention to the vigorous crop of ballets which brave the black-out. At the Lyric, Hammersmith, *Les Ballets Trois Arts* (why not "The Three Arts Ballet"?) has made a promising and even profitable beginning before an appreciative audience. It is still rehearsing itself into perfection, but it already has one great asset; it seems to have solved the problem of musical accompaniment. Its musical director, the young composer Stanley Bate, has formed an ensemble of eight soloists, conducted by Emanuel Yourovsky, and the quality and volume of their playing is admirable. The best effort of the company so far is the ballet *Perseus*, music by Stanley Bate, choreography by John Regan, décor and costumes by Toni del Renzio. The music is particularly interesting and has already attracted considerable attention. Leo Kersley promises to be a fine dancer. Maria Sanina and Olga Valevska, of the Russian ballet, are also in the company.

The Rambert Ballet, for which Anthony Tudor's first ballets were composed, is still at the Duchess with an excellent programme.

Elizabeth Schooling is particularly good in Frank Staff's amusing trifle, *The Tartans*, and Sally Gilmour as the Mermaid fulfils our high expectations. A new ballet is promised next week: *Czernyana*, choreography by Frank Staff. Ram Gopal's season at the Vaudeville is happily prolonged till the end of next week. No one who cares about dancing or the perfection of human movement can afford to miss him. We welcome the prominence given this week to the Javanese Retna Mohini, a mysterious and very musical dancer, with a fine technique. She also appears with Ram Gopal in one beautiful, almost static dance, Siva-Parvati.

"Disputed Passage," at the Plaza
"The Under Pup," at the Odeon
"On the Night of the Fire," at the Leicester Square Theatre

Disputed Passage is an earnest story of the medical profession, and the struggle between devotion to science and the human soul. John Beaven (John Howard) is the pupil of Dr. Forster (Akim Tamiroff) whose soul has definitely been bested in the struggle. Dr. Forster is determined that Beaven, whom he recognises as a genius, shall devote his whole life to science. When Audrey Hilton (Dorothy Lamour) appears on the screen Beaven thinks differently and decides to marry her. Audrey Hilton is an American girl who has been brought up in China by Chinese foster-parents and who has absorbed more than her fair share of oriental wisdom and resignation, so she is easily prevailed upon by Dr. Forster to abandon Beaven for the sake of his career. Without so much as saying goodbye in her lilting pidgin English she goes back to China, where Beaven promptly follows her. Here the film unexpectedly and with startling effect plunges into the midst of the war in China. Beaven arrives in a bomb-stricken city; while he is at the hospital helping with the wounded the planes come over again and while the terrified patients lie helpless in their beds another raid takes place. It would be impossible to exaggerate the horrors of this sequence. Beaven is wounded, Dr. Forster arrives in time to operate, he is reunited with Audrey and Forster regains his soul. The happy ending does not succeed in softening the impression of the bombing incident with its uneasy reminder of the events of the past two years in China.

The Under Pup presents, for the first time on the screen, Gloria Jean, the new Deanna Durbin. Gloria Jean plays a girl from an east-side tenement who wins an essay prize in the shape of a trip to a summer camp patronised exclusively by the daughters of wealthy parents. The girls don't like Gloria Jean much and, as the synopsis says, "deride her social status," but this is mainly because they lead unhappy home lives and because their parents neglect them. Gloria Jean well understands how dreadful this must be, for not only has she got Aubrey Smith for a Grandpa but also a Mom and Pop and about twelve uncles who dote on her, and are far happier than all the silly old rich people put together; at least until Gloria Jean teaches them a thing or two. She stops an imminent divorce, softens the hard spinster heart of the camp organiser, converts the bad girl, and becomes the most popular girl in the camp. All this serves merely to give Gloria Jean the opportunity of singing, and of portraying the maximum number of emotions; she is gay, tough, repentant, tearful; she prays, she fights, she coaxes, and wheedles. Her voice is small but pretty and her acting is nothing if not thoroughly efficient, but more than efficiency is necessary for an aspirant to Miss Durbin's throne.

On the Night of the Fire is something of an event amongst British films and being dramatic, well acted and well directed. A barber, tempted by the desire to escape from the squalor of his surroundings, steals one hundred pounds. He is blackmailed and commits a murder. His wife suspects him—then the whole street; there is no evidence against him though the police are convinced of his guilt. At last his resistance breaks down and he is shot while attempting to escape arrest. This story is embellished by the most remarkable attention to detail, atmosphere, and to the minor characters. The bleak dreariness of the slums, the hideous interiors, the women in the pubs, all are presented with conviction. Diana Wynyard and Ralph Richardson seem somehow too refined for such squalid surroundings, but Mary Clare as a mad slattern gives a brilliant performance and all the minor characters are excellently portrayed. The director, Brian Desmond Hurst, deserves special commendation.

Little Pictures, at the Leicester Galleries

Messrs. Brown and Phillips invited some thirty-eight artists to make pictures 8½ inches by 6, to be sold at the uniform price of five guineas. The result is an exhibition of a hundred and thirty-two pictures, which gives extraordinary pleasure. Indeed the excellence of the exhibits supports the argument of what Mr. Clive Bell calls the Strait Waistcoat School, that is, those who think that the artist is helped rather than hindered by having conditions imposed upon him. If the contemporary English School is weak in design and thoroughness, its sensibility is its strength, and in these little canvases one finds very frequently charm and poetic suggestiveness. Simon Bussy is used to working on this scale, and his contributions are exquisite. But how surprisingly well Graham Sutherland has concentrated into 51 square inches the romantic robustness of his invention, what beautiful little windows into the country Mr. Moynihan has constructed with his variegated brush strokes. Geoffrey Tibble, as always, makes heavy demands on the spectator's co-operation, but his sketches show his affinity with Constable. Robert Medley shows the influence of Cézanne in a couple of nudes, of Daumier and Rouault in three A.R.P. stretcher-party scenes. These little pictures are among his best works. Several painters show the suitability of tempera to this small scale, John Piper's architectural pieces being particularly engaging. John Armstrong is here at his gayest, and Ashley Havinden paints delightful decorations in a style that on larger canvases would become empty. Roger Pettiward has a lively eye but unpleasant handling. Kenneth Rowntree, Beryl Sinclair (74), Carel Weight (87), Mary Potter, Mervyn Peake, Kapp, Mary Kessell, John Aldridge and Barbara Mackenzie-Smith all have skilfully adapted themselves to the conditions imposed. Morland Lewis gives to his miniature views the bloom of a grape. Altogether this is the most enjoyable mixed show of English pictures that one could wish for, and we hope that the public will show their appreciation by purchasing.

French and English Colour Prints, at the Redfern Gallery
Watercolours and Drawings by George Lambourn, at the Mathieson Gallery

The Redfern Gallery is to be congratulated on the rich collection of French prints they have assembled. The early Bonnard lithographs are a fascinating example of how a fine artist could put Art Nouveau shapes to good purpose. The Vuillards are delicate and gay, there are beautiful examples of the rare Lautrec *Tonneau* and Renoir *Enfants Jouant à la Balle*. The genius of Rouault is splendidly expressed in some hitherto unpublished aquatints from the Vollard collection, and by a self-portrait of particular beauty. This is in a more delicate style than usual, and the romantic head is a little like Baudelaire's. Sisley, Manet, Pissarro, Gauguin, Guillaumin, Utrillo and Maillol are also represented. Beside the Frenchmen, our native artists in the show cut a poor figure. None of the "Contemporary Lithographs" productions are shown, and apart from these lithography in this country is too often a genteel hobby for well-meaning ladies. Leon Lang, Margaret Laing, Gwendolen Raverat and John Farleigh are conspicuous exceptions. Their exhibits are skilful, personal and interesting.

Mr. George Lambourn at the Mathieson Gallery shows a number of drawings and watercolours. He is fluent in a variety of styles and obviously paints as a pleasure rather than as a duty. *On the Beach*, *Boy's Head*, *Boy Playing Whistle*, and *Still Life With Milk Bottles* are good specimens of his versatility.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, December 2nd—
- Performance of the Refugee Youth Players (German, Austrian, Spanish and Czech), Besant Hall, Baker Street, 3.

SUNDAY, December 3rd—
- John Katz: "The Fate of Homo Sapiens," Conway Hall, 11.
- Public Meeting on Federal Union. Speakers: C. E. M. Joad and H. N. Brailsford, Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, 2.30.
- Beecham Sunday Concert, Queens Hall, 2.45.
- Popular Concert, David Lloyd and Philharmonic String Trio, Embassy Theatre, 3.

TUESDAY, December 5th—
- Lunch-Hour Concert, Pianoforte Recital by Myra Hess, Mary Ward Settlement, 1. And Monday to Friday each week.
- Hon. Harold Nicolson: "The Present Background of the War," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
- D. N. Pritt: "The Democratic State at War," Imperial College, 4.15.
- "Punch Without Judy," New.
- "The Venetian," by Clifford Bax, Torch.

WEDNESDAY, December 6th—
Gerald Bailey: "Peace—at What Price?" Birbeck College, 7.30.
Westminster L.B.C. Meeting, "War and Liberty." Speakers: R. R. Stokes and R. H. T. Whitty, Co-operative Hall, Rochester Row, S.W.1, 8.
"Who's Taking Liberty," Whitehall.
THURSDAY, December 7th—
C. E. M. Joad: "Our Predicament and Some Ways Out," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
Rt. Hon. Viscount Samuel: "The Deeper Causes of the War and the Issues Involved," Royal Empire Society, 2.
W. G. East: "Mediterranean Problems of To-day and To-morrow," Canterbury Hall, Cartwright Gdns, W.C.1, 4.30.
"Lady Precious Stream," Kingsway.
SATURDAY, December 9th—
Union of Democratic Control People's Peace Conference: Speakers of different nationalities, Conway Hall, 3. And on December 10th at 2.30. Tickets at 1/- per session or 1/6 for whole conference from U.D.C., 34 Victoria St.

Correspondence

DEFENCE REGULATIONS

SIR,—We must congratulate Mr. Dingle Foot, M.P., on taking the initiative in challenging some of the most dangerous Regulations and we must be thankful that the Government has made important concessions in these directions. Nevertheless, we think it right to point out that the Regulations still contain a number of provisions which are capable of serious misuse.

Regulation 3 (3)*f*, which makes it an offence to possess or publish any document or information which might, directly or indirectly, be useful to an enemy is a permanent threat to all journalists and publishers. It is far too wide in its scope and vague in its wording. Mere *possession* is an offence, apart from any wrong use that may or may not be made of such information.

Regulations 12 to 15, relating to "protected places" might be used to prevent entry and negotiation by Trade Union officials who were not concerned in any way with espionage or subversive activities. Moreover, the right of peaceful picketing can be rendered inoperative.

Although, under Regulation 18 B (1) the question whether the Secretary of State had or had not "reasonable cause" to detain a suspected person can now be tested by an application to the High Court for a writ of *Habeas Corpus*, the fact remains that the suspect can be put away without any trial in a court of law. The courts have shown—particularly in cases where persons have been accused of "obstructing the police" by refusing to stop a meeting when ordered to do so—that they are far too ready to infer a "reasonable cause" for a belief simply on a statement by the executive officer that he had in fact such a "reasonable cause" to anticipate a breach of the peace. And, incidentally, of course, the amendments do not touch the cases of enemy aliens interned under the prerogative powers.

We suggest that the power of the Secretary of State (under 23 (3)) to ban assemblies on grounds of public safety, should be delegated not to a chief officer of police but to an elected body—i.e. the local authority.

The censorship powers were transferred from the Secretary of State to the Ministry of Information by an Order in Council of September 5th, but in the amended Regulation 39 B (2) they appear to be vested once again in the Secretary of State. Which authority is actually to exercise these important functions in future?

The Secretary of State's power, under 39 E (1), to ban meetings on a suspicion of "disaffection" or on an anticipated breach of the peace (we know how breaches of the peace were engineered at peace meetings in the last war) is most undesirable. If a speaker commits an offence at a meeting he should be dealt with under the existing law (which is perfectly adequate to deal with such cases) in the courts.

The power to suspend the Factory Acts, etc., under Regulation 59, remain, with its almost inevitable result of increasing the accident rate.

Entry and search without a warrant, under 88 A (2) remains objectionable, for we know how the police are liable to interpret the urgent necessity in such cases. With regard, also, to the power given to police officers and members of His Majesty's Forces to arrest without warrant in case of a suspected offence under the Regulations, we would recommend that such power be confined to suspected offences which clearly involve the safety of the realm. There seems to be no good reason for the general application of this power.

RONALD KIDD,
Secretary
The National Council for Civil Liberties,
Morley House, 320 Regent Street,
London, W.1.

THE U.S.S.R.

SIR,—Is it too late for you to condemn in this issue the action of Great Big Bully Finland in its snub to poor Russia?

OSBERT SITWELL

SIR,—Those of us who, as members of the Communist Party, retain our belief in Russia and who, freely admitting recent mistakes, now oppose the present war, have in the past few weeks been treated with considerable abuse and misrepresentation, and we are held guilty, in the opinion of many besides Mr. Coventry, of "arrant nonsense of a type unpleasantly common." In detail, we are accused of trailing after Stalin and, at his command, of scrapping all our previous beliefs and principles; and it is further held against us we "can only read the word freedom when it is written in Spanish, Abyssinian, Czech, Russian, or Chinese," and that, in consequence, we would be disowned by our Party if we went out to fight "in defence of (English) liberties won by long struggles." Now these charges, implying, as they do, that we are prepared to be indifferent to the achievements of our own country when such an attitude happens to suit the Russian Government, cannot be allowed to pass without protest. We cannot conceal from ourselves (and it gives me, personally, no pleasure to have to admit the fact) that the exponents of the Liberal tradition are no longer with us, but at least we would ask not to be maligned by our Liberal friends until we have been rightly understood. While we are permitted a brief legality, and before we are killed at the front or in our homes, we will press for recognition, in particular, of the following points:—

(i) Our belief in Russia, which is not shaken, rests upon a basis that can, of its nature, not be available to Liberals, namely upon a conviction that Socialism (or Communism) is essentially just and right, and that Russia is a Socialist country. And it is this belief (whose implications are less naive than the wording may suggest) which enables us to retain our belief, even when compelled to admit that many things (and for me this refers to the cultural situation) are far from satisfactory inside Russia. But while this belief would make us only too glad to accept advice from Moscow, we have not, in these recent weeks, acted upon Stalin's instructions because he failed to send any. It is the duty of every national Party to work out its own policy, and if those national policies happen to coincide (though for some weeks the policies of our Party and of America's were diametrically opposed), it is because we all happen to be Communists, who do not claim to base their policies upon the arbitrary convictions of talented individuals but upon a body of tested theoretical writings. In short, if the discussion which has just taken place within our Party and which involved the removal of Mr. Harry Pollitt from Secretaryship of the Party is the result of outside dictation, we would recommend a few other political parties, less scrupulous in their spring-cleaning, to try the strength of their constitutions with a dose of the same medicine.

(ii) Contrary to Mr. Coventry's belief, we do not despise those who, in their honest hatred of Fascism, will die in the belief that they do so in a just cause; we only regret that their honesty is in danger of such wretched betrayal. Nor, though lacking their belief, are we applying for exemption from military service, since our main task must lie among the fighting services. But it seems reasonable to add that our lack of faith in the cause for which we will be fighting, whether or not it is justified, will hardly make the hardships and the sacrifices any easier for us.

(iii) And finally we would like it to be known that our pride in the struggles of the Spanish and the Chinese peoples does not entitle Mr. Coventry to assume a monopoly of pride in the achievements of the British peoples. If our liberties have been won by "long struggles," we may legitimately claim to have taken no insignificant part in these struggles, and we thus do not need reminding that they have to be defended. Our Parties were not slow to form their ranks on Spanish soil when the war was genuinely anti-Fascist; nor will we be slow to forget how many of our comrades died in Spain on the bayonets of Non-Intervention.

We were proud to fight then, we would be proud to fight in China; and if we are called at some future time to fight in a war that we feel convinced is anti-Fascist (and we can have no desire to feel otherwise), then we shall not be slow to form once again our International Brigades for the defence of our cultural traditions and the perfection of our democracies in England and France. Until then we shall die (and this, at least, may satisfy Mr. Coventry), protesting against the mockery of such sacrifice.

A CONSCRIPT COMRADE

WAR AIMS

SIR,—The reluctance of responsible people to face the grim realities in the present situation is one of the grimmest factors in it. I submit that the one chance of saving British democracy is in an immediate ending of the war; and if British democracy goes, we may anticipate half a century of totalitarian twilight over Europe.

My chief reasons for believing that freedom cannot survive a war to a finish, or even a prolonged war, are these: First, that the enormous increase in man-power production during six years of war and war production (it is nearly 100 per cent. in the heavy industries); the wide extension of industrial production in neutral and hitherto primary commodity producing countries, during the same period, and the rapid extension of monopolistic control over markets, etc., by Germany, Italy and Japan since 1932, and latterly by Russia also, insure that inside twelve or eighteen months of the war's close, a slump of unprecedented dimensions will occur, which will bring out the most reactionary measures in the armoury of Conservatism. Immediately the shortage caused by the war is made up, the seven economic units into which the world is fast being divided, will close up like oysters, and hasten a crisis of such proportions as may well overthrow democracy throughout Europe. Secondly, that according to the rosiest of Ministerial pronouncements, the utmost we may expect after the war are slight modifications in tariff and colonial policies with no material change on the home front, whereas the least that is necessary to save British democracy and to stabilise and pacify Europe is the widest application of the economics of abundance, and in harmony therewith of the principles of international economic co-operation. The chances of getting such policies adopted by Chamberlain, Churchill or even Lord Halifax are nil, while every day the war continues will strengthen the forces of reaction and the case for reactionary measures when hostilities cease.

There is a strong case for the view that any defeat of Germany in this war will end in the extinction of British democracy. A war to a finish will result in hopeless devastation and exhaustion, and possibly in revolution, which Russia would probably assist. In any case, Russia would be master of Europe. The sequel would be capitalist totalitarianism in Britain and France. But even an economic and diplomatic triumph, followed by a Big Business Government in Germany—if France could be persuaded to give up the idea of dismembering Germany—would have to be supported by a Reichswehr Dictatorship and by British finance, both of which would collapse on the approach of the slump already foreshadowed. But the chances are that this little revolution at the top would be challenged from below, by the old Marxian Left, by those National Socialists who support the new economic regime and the dethronement of the financial magnates, and also by the millions of Nazis who owe their positions to the Nazi regime. In either case totalitarianism would follow in Britain and France, as already indicated.

One may, like the Labour Party, flourish a packet of Peace Aims, but the irony of the situation is that the Labour Party is supporting a Government that is not specifically pledged to a single item in its programme, notwithstanding that the new Peace Treaty will be made in conditions which will necessitate, under capitalism, an even worse Treaty than that of Versailles. Labour's criticism of the Administration can be effective to-day by reason of its co-operation with the Government against a common enemy. But when the war is over Labour will be the enemy.

A stage has been reached when large-scale action of the kind suggested, involving the sacrifice of economic monopoly and a measure of sovereignty, alone can meet the spiritual demands of our time. Such action, initiated by Britain would so stir the sap in the stunted tree of European civilisation as to create a new hope, a lively consciousness of infinite possibility which no dictator could smother. It is in such a consciousness that the peace and security of Europe lie, and the present lull may be our last opportunity to create it. Hitler has succeeded thus far because his revolt coincided with his country's economic need. When that condition ceases to exist, his chances of success in a policy of aggression will be nil.

What most people even yet fail to recognise is that this war is part of the process of capitalist collapse; that 1914, 1917, 1919, 1930-32, 1932-38, and 1939 were avalanches in the final disintegration of capitalist civilisation. The Russian Revolution of 1917 and, as we now see, the Nazi Revolution of 1933, were battering rams in the side of European capitalism. Whatever be the ultimate appraisement of Lenin and Hitler, they were iconoclasts who sought to remove the devastating forces of capitalism, and it will be our right to denounce their methods when we have secured the salvation they sought, by less painful means. To thrust Germany back under Big Business rule would be a retreat for civilisation.

The immediate issue is, shall we sacrifice 20,000,000 lives and thousands of towns and cities in order to remove Hitler—and possibly Stalin also—to extend totalitarianism and give a new lease of life to collapsing capitalism, or shall we face the deep spiritual demands of our time and ask capitalism to make the necessary sacrifices? I believe there is hope. The Left is awakening on a wide front; uneasiness is spreading in most thinking circles, and even Labour must soon see the danger of too long wandering in a wilderness from which, as a little reflection would reveal, its political enemies will provide no means of escape.

WILFRED WELLOCK

SIR,—Has anybody talking about our war aims, which seem to include every social reform and a golden age, realised what the situation will *really* be after we shall have succeeded in defeating the Nazi Government? Three or four million German soldiers demobilised, about twice as many workers released from war work in the factories; an empty treasury without gold or foreign assets, a devaluated currency, all exports gone, a people semi-starved by the blockade, clamouring for bread, textiles, and all the commodities; an industry without raw materials, an agriculture in need of fodder and other necessities; minds kept for many years in an agitated obscurity, unused, and unable, to face the truth and the world as it will then be revealed to them—I am afraid we shall have to strain our last resources, and those of Europe as well, to stop the corpse of Hitler's Germany from poisoning the rest of the world. If Germany is beaten, there will be seventy million people on the brink of revolution, ready for anything, trained, as Rauschnigg rightly asserts, for nihilism. We should prepare *now* to deal with this situation, instead of fixing imaginary peace aims in an imaginary world.

H. W. BELMORE

THE HOHENLOHE CASE

SIR,—Polycritic refers us to *The Times* for the case of Rothermere and the Princess. The following example of press censorship suggests that this is not an ideal source.

The *Daily Worker* of November 11th reported as follows from a particularly interesting letter from Captain Wiedemann to Lord Rothermere:

> . . . You know, my Lord, that the Fuehrer greatly appreciates the work that the Princess did to straighten relations between our countries. The work was done, and this the Princess never ceased to repeat, on your behalf and on your instructions. That it was done by her with great ability, astuteness and tact, you surely know.
>
> You surely know too that the Princess last May, with your assistance, started negotiations with Lord Halifax and it was her groundwork that made the Munich agreement possible.

The *Daily Telegraph* and *News-Chronicle* unanimously reported these paragraphs as follows:—

> You know that the Fuehrer greatly appreciates the work the Princess did to straighten relations between our countries. . . . It was her groundwork which made the Munich Agreement possible.

The Times, even more cautiously, only "referred" to the letter. I had not the courage to buy the *Daily Herald* for comparison.

MICHAEL GORDON

FEDERATION WITH FRANCE

SIR,—In your leading article on "Partnership and Federation" you appear to regard it as axiomatic that benefits can accrue to this country from the generous sunshine which prevails in France. You forget that the National Government came into power with the avowed intention of stopping that sort of thing. It promptly voted that the earth was flat and imposed drastic fiscal safeguards against malignant foreigners who conducted themselves under

the Copernican system. Thus the declared principle behind the Horticultural Duties of 1932 was that foreigners took unfair advantage of their nearer proximity to the equator to send ripe fruit and vegetables to the English market before the English farmer had got his out of the ground, and penalties were imposed to ensure that everybody started from scratch. What can you do with such people? If someone had pointed out to Lord Baldwin that the Japanese took unfair advantage of their longitude to get up earlier in the morning and collar all the business before Lancashire was out of bed, that amiable gentleman farmer would have swallowed the yarn hook, line and sinker, and instructed his scientific tariff board to remedy the situation. The Japanese problem was, however, tackled in another way. The abundant labour supply of Japan, analogous to the abundant sunshine of the Midi, was stigmatised as an unfair natural advantage and savage quotas were clamped on Japanese exports to our colonies. Bellowing in favour of these measures that fustian Protectionist ranter, Mr. J. L. Garvin, declared that "we will not sacrifice British interests either to the virtues or the vices of a rival," and in deference to this doctrine the Japanese militants politely exchanged our colonial markets for China. We shall now have to make concessions to the Japanese in China, and incidentally to the Italians in Tunis and the Russians in the Baltic and the Balkans, in order to teach the Germans that aggression doesn't pay. Well, the soft air of France may be a virtue or a vice, but can you see our Brummagem gang of imperialists sacrificing Australian Burgundy interests to the sunshine of the Côte d'Or? Not even if the French solemnly promised not to give away the twelfth bottle free. As you point out, poor old Cobden would have left the business to the hazards of *laissez-faire* and competitive trading.

G. L. SCHWARTZ

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS

SIR,—Mr. Rimel's statement that the Access to Mountains Act has been abandoned for the duration of the war is absolutely untrue. The Regulations under the Act are being considered now.

House of Commons. A. CREECH JONES

ARTHUR MANN

SIR,—The news of Mr. Arthur Mann's retirement from the editorship of the *Yorkshire Post* will distress all who value integrity, independence, and spirit. For month after month he maintained against all the formidable pressure of the party system and the strong prejudices of the wealthy classes the truth, as he saw it, about the foreign policy through which we drifted to disaster. By his skill and courage he made the *Yorkshire Post* a powerful force in the struggle for a bolder and more generous treatment of the miseries and dangers of Europe. The historian, when he studies those melancholy years, will admire the far-sighted wisdom that inspired, and the large moral sympathies that guided his criticism from day to day. The loss of such a critic would be a public disaster. The widespread respect that he gained shows that men who understand by their leadership the free and fearless use of their minds are still appreciated in this age of mass pressure.

J. L. HAMMOND

THE ARTIST AND HIS PUBLIC

SIR,—Last week you published an article headed "The Artist and his Public," which dealt with a pamphlet I have written on this subject. Your critic, Mr. Clive Bell, wrote:

> . . . Moreover, being, as he calls it, a "scientific socialist," which, if one happens to be a painter in the Euston Road is called being a "social-realist," he has orders, down whatever road he chance to stray, to end at Moscow. . . . Whatever may be amiss with art must turn out to be the fault of those wicked capitalists.

In this passage, myself and my pamphlet are misrepresented. I am not, nor have I ever claimed to be, either "scientific socialist" or "social realist." Palpably I have no "orders to end at Moscow." The last sentence of the passage quoted mis-states my whole purpose. I do not blame anyone or any class, but try to show a connection between declining capitalism and devitalised art.

I do not attempt here to justify my pamphlet, since Mr. Bell has ignored its sense for a dummy of his own creation. But since THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION critic has been thus stultified, I beg that such of its readers as are interested will disregard his attempt to brush my work aside as twenty-six pages of nonsense, and form their own conclusions. GRAHAM BELL

Rodwell House,
Baylham, Suffolk.

"PRESENT WITHOUT LEAVE"

SIR,—In a review of my autobiography, *Present Without Leave*, your reviewer writes: "His guide is Sir Edward Marsh, who sets him in the right places, and views with distress his abstinence from writing; he procured a contract for an anthology which is still unpublished."

The ambiguity may suggest that Sir Edward procured me a contract which I failed to fulfil; after which a guilty conscience "drove Mr. Cresswell back to New Zealand." But Sir Edward had nothing whatever to do with the contract, which was offered me by a publisher, as I plainly and clearly state in the book. But our current reviewers' English would make the best book obscure.

Further on I am described as "working as a lumberman," on the strength of a job I had with the New Zealand Forestry Service, which I took pains to describe as the care and planting of trees.

Reviewers should carefully read the books they review, and then their opinions would have more weight. My numbering of paragraphs is described as "a precious but not offensive affectation." My text has no other division, and I numbered the paragraphs, therefore, for reference. The affectation isn't in me.

The Cottage, D'ARCY CRESSWELL
8 Abercorn Place, N.W.8.

THIS ENGLAND

On every bookstall next Friday (December 8th), for a shilling, readers will be able to buy the second issue of THIS ENGLAND, containing several hundreds of items gathered from the feature in these columns over the last two years. LOW contributes, as before, some most amusing illustrations and a coloured cover. V. S. Pritchett, who has compiled the volume, says in his Foreword: "It is published in the belief that the Englishman is genial enough to enjoy holding the mirror to his own absurdities, and shrewd enough to profit by the experience." THIS ENGLAND, 1940, will make an admirable Christmas or New Year card.

NEW WRITING

★ No. 3 of this "Yellow Book of the Thirties" is a specially enlarged Christmas Number (7*s.* 6*d.*), and completes the New Series. It has all the well-known features, stories, sketches, reportage, poems, and finely illustrated articles on the arts in England and abroad.

★ *The New Statesman* said last week of the contributions to this number that they "are on such a consistently high level that it would be almost invidious to mention names." We are delighted to agree, but would like all the same to warn you not to miss V. S. Pritchett's long short-story, George Orwell's sketch, Elsa Triolet's reminiscences of Mayakovsky, and the new poems by W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Louis MacNeice and George Barker, which have all been praised already by the critics.

★ *The Listener* also said last week: "there is nothing left but *New Writing* to supply the demand for good prose, good verse, and good criticism." We need hardly add further reasons of our own for thinking that *New Writing* should be in every intelligent person's library.

★ Have you a complete set of the New Series? We suggest that Nos. 1, 2 and 3 together make a bumper Christmas present.

HOGARTH PRESS

Current Literature

AN OUTSTANDING REPORT

Behind the Battle. By T. C. WORSLEY. *Hale.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

It is said that "no one" wants to read about the Spanish Civil War now, but I cannot believe this is true. Our own war has shown us that war is not something which occurs only to dagos. We, too, have entered the penitentiary atmosphere; we, too, observe the guilty bewildered looks of our friends, and ourselves have the sensations of being in the dock with our defence muddled and its dossier lost. Added to this emotional affinity with the Spaniards, there is the fact that the books now being published on the Spanish war are far superior to those written two years ago. Propaganda, with its success mentality so fatal to writers, has dwindled; and the whole thing is clearer for being recollected in tranquillity.

Mr. T. C. Worsley's ingenious story of his own experiences in Spain is one of those better works. It is something more than a readable, first person narrative written with the attractive note of apologia characteristic of our time; it is a book which has been really *written* and therefore pleases upon reflection. Mr. Worsley begins by telling how he and Mr. Stephen Spender, with that innocent amateurishness which coloured nearly all Left-wing activity in those days, went to Spain and Morocco to discover what had happened to the *Kommosol*. The Russian ship, it will be remembered, was reported sunk in the Mediterranean by what in the Never-Never language of non-intervention used to be called "an unknown Power." Mr. Worsley then stayed on in Spain, listened to the Popular Front talking its head off in Barcelona and finally joined an American Blood Transfusion Unit as a lorry driver. This turned out at first to be a kind of Laurel and Hardy farce in slow motion, but suddenly he and his eccentric employer found themselves in the middle of the retreat from Malaga, the most tragic disgraceful and shattering exodus of the modern world. Most disgraceful in that it did *not* stir the conscience of the world—at least not for longer than it takes to read the morning paper. Understandable, of course. The one thing the world conscience could not bear to face was, as it still is, the class issue which confronted it. Mr. Worsley was in the retreat. Driving his truck towards Motril on an empty road he began to notice families in ones and twos coming towards him every quarter of a mile. Gradually they became a thin straggling line and at last a dust cloud grinding up the road in the full rout of civilian panic. At once the Unit decided to help, Mr. Worsley and his friends were the centre of wild, filthy and heartrending scenes and he has done an unforgettable picture of them, indeed his is the outstanding report, moving, vivid and humane, of that awful pilgrimage. He has done it simply, not piling literary melodrama on to the burden of human tragedy. It ended as we know in the bombing of these worn out, starving and half-dying men, women and children at Almeria. One feels, after reading Mr. Worsley's narrative, that one would like to obtain the names of the pilots who were responsible. The world's conscience has become far too remotely delegated and it is going to be necessary to instil some sort of morality into aviators. One might usefully begin with the pirates.

In a sense the tragic chapters of this book are awkwardly married to the earlier pages of comedy which deal chiefly with the characters of the two Americans who were Mr. Worsley's companions. This awkwardness is not really Mr. Worsley's fault. He writes in the first person, and we use this method of personal deposition nowadays, not only because of candour and fearlessness, but also (I think) because we have not made up our minds. "At least I can put down everything I see since I have found no authority which will make me impersonal." This is the liberal spirit, so liberal that it has abandoned even scepticism. One wonders whether the horror and comedy of *Candide* are well-married because they are the work of a man who is not free.

There is almost a surrealist inconsequence in Mr. Worsley's two Americans and that is why the word "ingenious" describes his book. The Doc, Rathbone, has the chief part. War turns most men into actors and the Doc was acting most of the time. He was acting to an audience which was sometimes other people but was always the other half of himself. He was in Spain to help and he helped admirably as long as it was understood that he was the boss and he had come out at a chaotic time when the semi-adventurer was just the man to start things. He was that equivocal human type, the mountebank who is half genuine and really does get things done. But under this theatrical exterior there was a curiously plodding, almost lugubrious side. He and Hesketh, his assistant, were a pair of solemn, nagging drolls. In the midst of war they sat down with the owlishness of adolescents—and American adolescents at that—and argued conscientiously whether it was better to be "intuitional" about the truck (Rathbone) or "rational" about it (Hesketh). They tabulated each other's shortcomings like schoolmasters, and slowly went over the finer points with the delicacy of farm tractors. And all so fraternally and so concerned, always expository never resentful. From Hemingway they had taken on an awful pseudo-toughness. They were always apologising for "getting tough" with "guys." And, fundamentally, they were irresponsible. Happily they were soft-hearted and practical about "kids" and one of the really vivid and revealing moments is when Dr. Rathbone goes tough in Almeria and snatches the bread from the soldiers so that the exhausted refugee children shall have bread and milk, instead of being half killed with a diet of fried eggs and potatoes.

The pair must have been bores in life; in literature they are fascinating. Writers should never avoid bores. The end of the Doc was typical. For some time, as the war grew more orderly and reputable, he had been distrait and a trifle sulky. He was evidently preoccupied with thoughts of being the Henry Irving of a bigger stage. He philosophised,

> "Death," he said. "What is it, after all? It's a terrible thing. . . . And yet, it's a mean thing. A noble thing . . . and yet a petty thing. Glorious . . . and yet ignominious. Proud . . . yet somehow humble. The Greatest Tragedy . . . and the Greatest Comedy . . ."

And so, a Falstaff of the dictaphone and the press interview, he went off to try blood transfusion on the 8th Route Army in China.

V. S. PRITCHETT

NEW NOVELS

John Arnison. By EDWARD THOMPSON. *Macmillan.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Our Lives Are Swiss. By PETER CHAMBERLAIN. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Nanking Road. By VICKI BAUM. *Bles.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
My Uncle Silas. By H. E. BATES. *Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*
John Innocent at Oxford. By RICHARD BUCKLE. *Chatto and Windus.* 5*s.*

It is the critic's cross and the writer's ruin that there is no adequate definition of the novel, and that distinctions made readily in practice are not so easily justified in theory. Carlyle's panegyric of the horrible Frederick, for instance, has more in common with *Salammbo* than the latter has with *I, Claudius;* while the gap separating William from Henry James is not so vast as that lying between such catalogue-companions as Dunne and Freud, or Gibbon and Bishop Stubbs. General reviewing has become specialised, and the critic is no longer expected to be master of every subject. The novel-reviewer, however, is credited with the universality of Shakespeare and the catholic taste of a jackdaw; and might, if he worked for an old-established and rather dilatory journal, be expected to assess and compare *Jane Eyre*, *Esther Waters*, *War and Peace* and *Two-gun Tex* in a single brief article. The quality by which the novel is usually defined—that of describing imaginary persons and events—is neither satisfactory nor exclusive, for it both includes such direct and accurate biographies as *Sons and Lovers*, and rejects a great many histories and reminiscences that are really fiction of the most sensational sort. In truth, the word "novel" has lost any meaning it possessed, and become no more than a fashionable label to recommend unpopular wares. A travelogue won't sell? Then call it *Flight from a Lady*. Philosophy is too arid? Then throw in wit, some parody and a few comic butts, and call it *After Many a Summer*. Following religious controversy, epic poetry, and the drama, fiction has in our time become the prevailing literary mode, and the true novelists are swamped beneath a flood of sensitive, intelligent, quite uncreative people in search of self-expression. Most modern novelists would, if they could, write in another form, but in their efforts to satisfy public demand have hamstrung their own best abilities. It might be fairest for the critic to class each novel separately, and judge many not as fiction but as the type of book their author truly intended.

John Arnison is an admirable and attractive study of Edwardian nonconformity, superficially disguised as a novel. Mr. Thompson claims that after nearly two hundred years of persecution and

The FORTNIGHTLY

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★ *The three works will be published in the issues of THE FORTNIGHTLY dated DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH.*

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT TO "NEW STATESMAN" READERS

So great was the response of "New Statesman" readers to our special subscription offer last month, that we have decided to renew this offer, as follows: THE FORTNIGHTLY is published at 3/6 net monthly (2 Gns. per annum). We will send the next **four issues** of THE FORTNIGHTLY (containing the contributions of Mr. H. G. Wells, Dr. W. R. Inge and the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher) post paid on receipt of a currency note, postal order or cheque for 10/-. (NOTE.—This offer is not available to present subscribers of The Fortnightly.)

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disability, nonconformity burst into flower, and was, for a brief space, England's spiritual and intellectual driving force. John, a young member of that narrow but entertaining Arnison family to which we have already been introduced, is used as a pavlovian dog to demonstrate the movements of the pre-war *zeitgeist*, and reacts appropriately to every appropriate stimulus. We see him bored and exploited as a bank clerk, torn unhappily between God plus respectability and God plus the labour theory of value, thrown upon his own resources as a local preacher, and, finally, more or less reconciled to an active part in the class struggle. Mr. Thompson writes well, is patently sincere, and possesses, like Dickens, the rare ability to create characters who are also "characters," and may well become the clichés of his imitators. Yet *John Arnison* is not a success; for in his efforts to be simultaneously story-teller and social historian, the author falls between two stalls and will satisfy neither of his potential audiences. Mr. Thompson is a fluent narrator, and his picture of John's slavery at the Bank is reminiscent of Bennett at his pawkiest. But he seems to feel guilty about diluting his message with entertainment, and as soon as John smells the spiritual battle, he ceases to be a pleasantly convincing young fellow, and becomes the colourless playground of rather colourless ideas. The novel errs equally in the other direction. It has a great deal to say about the historical position and importance of nonconformity, but is continually hampered by a sense of obligation to the plot, so that John is tiresomely thrust in where the angels should have been left to sport by themselves. But although *John Arnison* fails, it is worth reading as a serious book in the true sense of the word; one can be sorry only that it was written as conventional fiction.

Our Lives Are Swiss is a collection of characteristic short stories by one of the few genuinely tough writers this country has produced. Mr. Chamberlain's toughness is neither of the what-the-hell-make-it-a-rye-straight brand familiarised to us by the Americans, nor does it belong to the roll-in-the-dung-and-rape-the-mill-girl school recently so popular among our own Left-wing writers, but springs from a peculiar turn of mind at once hard-boiled and frustrated. His especial gift is to portray that most pathetic of all types, the ruthless, callous, helpless, frightened, wholly miserable man of action; and unlike many of his rivals he realises that such men are not confined to any one class or way of life. The present stories (some of which have already appeared in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION) are a very good batch. A murderer concentrates on the problem of removing the body, but can't keep his mind from wandering into irrelevant side-tracks; a sadistic schoolmaster cunningly tortures a small boy (this is particularly horrible and effective); a young man loses his head at baccarat; an undistinguished youth has a farewell chat with his headmaster. These—and one about a bored, unhappy technical reporter on the job at the Isle of Man T.T.—are the best of the selection; but even the worst, such as a lamentable little translation of Jael and Sisera into Americanese ("Well, after a while, Sisera he goes off to sleep, what with one thing and another he's had a pretty busy day. But this groom he kind of snops round to keep an eye on what's what, and after a time he sees Jael take a tent peg and a mallet") are fresh and unashamedly lively. Mr. Chamberlain is a stimulating writer, but, unless he develops, it is difficult to forecast his literary future. Within his limits he is nearly perfect, but they are very narrow ones, no wider than those of, say, Mr. Evelyn Waugh. Good though it is, *Our Lives Are Swiss* is no better than *What the Sweet Hell*, and a first lap, however promising, does not always mean a satisfactory end to the race.

Nanking Road is a rehash of *Grand Hotel* set in a similar building in the Settlement at Shanghai. Nine people, mainly of the familiar international blend, are killed by a casual bomb at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war, and Miss Baum devotes her gigantic novel to retracing and interrelating their varied and spectacular careers. There is a German refugee doctor (pathetic), the gigolo son of his former chauffeur (tortured), a Russian adventuress who maddens men with desire but remains as cold as ice (maddening), a roaring Chinese self-made millionaire (noisy but inscrutable), a Japanese journalist, an opium addict, and so on. The individual stories of this mixed bag are generally interesting, and though we come upon such sentences as "The two lovers met in the turmoil of this town. Their union was profound and impenetrable, a primeval forest"—the book as a whole is bright and readable. Miss Baum's greatest fault is her obsession with the artificial unities. If she wishes to write about grand hotels, why bother to link the guests together; while if she wishes to describe relationships, why employ such clumsy machinery to bring her characters on the scene? *Nanking Road* contains long passages from what could have been at least three good novels, but as soon as one begins to grip the attention we are whirled away to another, until the effect is that of nine straight plays cut into sketches and combined in a non-stop revue. Aristotle has a lot to answer for.

My Uncle Silas may well become a minor classic. Some of the Silas stories have been published before, and their cranky, crotchety, Rabelasian hero is familiar to Mr. Bates' admirers. Silas cannot be described in a short review, for he is a creature of epic individuality, whose wit, vainglory and lust for cowslip wine can only be recounted in the set phrases and telling adjectives of his creator. Those who know him will want no recommendation; those who do not need only remember that Mr. Bates is one of the most capable of living short-story writers. The book, incidentally, is produced in quarto and attractively illustrated by Edward Ardizzone.

John Innocent at Oxford is a fantasy with a good basic idea. Mr. Buckle imagines Oxford at the end of this century metamorphised into a rococo Tyre and Sidon, with homosexual negro scouts, a Vice-Chancellor of anti-papal wickedness and splendour, and a dim Mr. Deeds to serve as commentator. Unfortunately, Mr. Buckle is inventive but not imaginative, pretentious but not polished, derivative but not from Beerbohm. He should have read his manuscript again next morning.

JOHN MAIR

A PROPHET OF THE PAST

Barbarians at the Gate. By LEONARD WOOLF. *Gollancz.* 6*s.*

The Left Book Club has done well to make *Barbarians at the Gate* its choice for December. Here, in a booklet written with exquisite clarity and single-minded purpose, we can find summarised that creed of Liberal Socialism which was the finest expression of Western European civilisation. All those who are busy formulating war-aims or peace terms would do well to interrupt the search for practical solutions and to consider with Mr. Woolf the philosophy upon which any real solution must rest. In the struggle against *Mein Kampf* we must first make sure that we know and act upon the principles of "Our Battle." Mr. Woolf, if he has not accomplished this, has at least given us an agenda of discussion. And that is no mean achievement.

Let us consider his argument. *Barbarians at the Gate* starts from the contrast between the civilised world of 1912 and the barbarism of 1939. In 1912 a Prussian Lieutenant beat up an Alsatian cobbler. The Zabern incident was front-page news and shook a German Government which was soon to be portrayed as a monster of frightfulness. In 1939 the German Government has condemned its Jewish population to slow death in a vast concentration camp in Poland; but in a world grown used to atrocities, the papers scarcely mention this "incident." Our lack of sensitivity is a measure of the advance of barbarism in the last quarter of a century. We are faced not merely by the barbarism at the gates, the Nazi war-machine, but by the barbarism inside the gate, the decline of our own standards of decency.

Mr. Woolf then proceeds to analyse the principles of civilisation. He shows how the ideals of Athens, as expressed in Pericles' funeral speech, have been the ideals of every Democrat and Socialist and Communist since the French Revolution. Though we differ about the means, we all want the same end, a society of free men. To achieve this we require three things: (1) communal control of the controllers of communal power, that is political democracy; (2) communal control of economic power, that is Socialism; (3) communal acceptance of the ethical values of justice, truth, tolerance and humanity, that is an enlightened public opinion. The absence of any one of these three will lead to barbarism, and Mr. Woolf shows how we have all failed because we have been content with one or other of them. The Liberal Democrat achieved the first, tried to create the third but resolutely refused the second. The Communist, in reaction against Liberal Democracy, concentrated solely on the second. The Social Democrat tried for all three and compromised on them all. Fascism is the retribution for this triple failure. Since we have failed to create a society of free men, Hitler is now constructing an empire inhabited by slaves. The world is divided into two camps, the inheritors of the traditions of Western civilisation who have, each in his own way, betrayed that tradition, and the barbarians whose avowed intent is the destruction of civilisation wherever it is found. Ours is a world where

> The best lack all conviction, and the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

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"Finance is the fourth arm of defence no less important than the other three, and if finance fails then the prop that sustains the whole of our war effort will collapse." THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER

LEND TO DEFEND THE RIGHT TO BE FREE

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL SAVINGS COMMITTEE

Mr. Woolf accuses the editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of being a Jeremiah lamenting a lost civilisation. His own book, finished before the defection of Russia, is made even more gloomy by his hard clarity of argument. With a logic as ruthless as that of Robespierre, he separates the sheep from the goats and delivers the latter to eternal damnation. To be saved we *must* believe in the practical possibility of full democracy, the communal control of the controllers of communal power. This may, of course,

> prove to be a problem which the feeble intelligence of such an anti-social animal as man can never solve. *But if you believe that, you cannot be a Communist, a Socialist or a Democrat : you are a Fascist and barbarian.*

This is not only a hard saying, but, to my mind, it is plain nonsense. It implies that anyone who doubts that perfectability of man, which the philosophers of the French Revolution preached, is eternally damned. Plato and Aristotle, Edmund Burke and De Tocqueville, even poor John Stuart Mill, are barred from Paradise by Mr. Leonard Woolf's flaming sword. They are not even allowed to dwell in the purgatory of the sceptic but are firmly shepherded to the flames which surround Genghis Khan, Machiavelli, Hitler and Mr. Baldwin. I doubt whether even Mr. Roosevelt, after squaring accounts with the recording angel, will avoid their fate.

That this sweeping condemnation is not merely a chance aberration is shown by a significant footnote on p. 203, which begins, " It will be observed that throughout this book I have included among ' the forces of civilisation ' no one who stands further to the Right than ' the Liberals.' " Mr. Woolf then goes on to admit that there are civilised Conservatives but argues that such a person " is politically and socially so muddled that no one, least of all himself, can tell whether, when the moment of crisis between civilisation and barbarism arrives he will hunt with the hounds or run with the hare, or try to do both." This seems to me even more dangerous nonsense than the first statement. It makes a distinction between the clear-sighted, courageous and determined Left and the muddled, half-hearted Right, which sounds curious after our experience of the last twelve weeks. Why should we not be honest and frankly admit that under the party-labels are gathered men and women of all sorts and distinctions, that the majority of party members and party leaders in this country try to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds ; and that only a tiny minority of visionaries *really* believe with Mr. Woolf in the *communal* control of the controllers of communal power, though nearly all of us believe that we and our friends should be in control of anything which affects our interests.

The fact is that, if Mr. Woolf's definitions were correct, 99 per cent. of the world is already Fascist-minded and so presumably deserves a Fascist Government. For Mr. Woolf assumes that a democratic country must be populated with people consciously aware of the principles of democracy and actively participating in government, and denounces as a Fascist anyone who believes this is impossible on a larger scale than the Greek city-state. The reason why every State must be more or less authoritarian is because man is a non-political animal, and the problem of civilising either plutocratic Britain or Communist Russia can never be solved so long as we believe we can *substitute* communal control for authority. Mr. Woolf contrasts civilised, free Athens with authoritarian barbarian Sparta. No Greek, least of all an Athenian, would have recognised this distinction. Sparta and Athens were both civilised in Greek eyes, and each of them suffered from an excess of an essentially civilised quality, Sparta from an excess of discipline and Athens from an excess of licence. Not even Pericles ever declared that the war against Sparta was a war between civilisation and barbarism.

For this reason I dislike Mr. Woolf's simple assumption, in common with Mr. Churchill, that the Nazis are Huns. It may be good enough as a war-slogan for the masses, but it comes strangely from a thinker of Mr. Woolf's dimensions. Though we abominate its cruelty and attacks on culture, we shall be living in a Utopia if we fail to realise that National Socialism is a monstrous part of our own civilisation, more so perhaps than the socialism of Communist Russia. I agree with him that the National Socialist State cannot last, but nor can British plutocracy. In Britain we are still living under the old dispensation, in Germany the tornado has already swept it away and below the superstructure of the Totalitarian State social forces, still inchoate and confused, are already stirring. The Socialist who fails to recognise this is as much a part of the *ancien régime* as Mr. Chamberlain.

That is the fundamental defect of *Barbarians at the Gate* Mr. Woolf understands, with a rare intensity of intuition, the principles of our civilisation but his synthesis is not of to-morrow or even of to-day but of yesterday. He is a Cassandra because he sees the faults of the past and overlooks the signs of the times. Measuring Europe by the Golden Age of 1789, he sees civilisation crumbling, barbarism triumphant. That is how a Greek felt in the fourth century, when the city-states were dying. He, too, looked back to a golden age and abhorred the semi-barbaric Alexander. He, too, prophesied doom because he could not see in the monstrous violence of the times the seeds of a new age. But he was wrong, just as, I believe, Mr. Woolf is wrong.

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Portrait of a Painter : The Authorised Life of Philip de László. By OWEN RUTTER. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 21s.

This book, if of no great intrinsic interest, will be of some use to students of the history of taste. László was for nearly thirty years the favourite portrait-painter of the rich and powerful. He was summoned from country to country, painting Popes, Habsburgs, Hohenzollerns, Bourbons and Coburgs ; painting Roosevelt, Mellon and Pierpont Morgan ; painting English Dukes and Mr. Balfour and Lord Curzon ; painting Sir Henry Wood, Lord Nuffield, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Madame Lupescu. The owners of Petworth and Arundel, of Mount Stewart and Syon, were proud to hang his work among their Van Dycks and Reynoldses and Gainsboroughs ; at Welbeck there is a whole " László Room." Yet nobody of education, one would suppose, could for an instant mistake him for an artist. In his interests and standards he resembled rather a dentist—the most successful and accomplished of dentists, of course, a dentist who moved in the highest society. His function, too, was closely akin to that of the dentist, for with his brush he supplemented the deficiencies of nature. Bodies were pared, faces were lengthened, fingers were tapered ; and with grateful delight his sitters saw on his canvases themselves as they would like to look. He made

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rich women look beautiful, he made aristocrats look aristocratic. Was not this well worth the 2,000 guineas he charged for a portrait?

Apart from this talent for flattery, he was signally ungifted. As a boy he worked for a Budapest photographer, whose prints he tinted with water-colours, and this training, like Rouault's apprenticeship to stained-glass, permanently influenced his painting. Not only was his handling uniformly unappetising, but he was unable to state those simple relations in space which concern every painter interested in representation. Compared with previously fashionable portraitists, with Millais or Bonnat or even Herkomer, he was plainly incompetent.

His prodigious success is the best illustration a historian could desire of the entire collapse of aesthetic knowledge among the rulers of the earth. Pius XI (twice described in this book as Pius IX) consented to sit for him only on condition that he first had a photograph enlarged on the canvas—a method to which László creditably objected. That the successor of Julius II and Leo X should make so barbarous a demand is a matter more for sorrow than for mirth. But there are in the book a number of amusing stories. I wish I had room to quote a glorious letter from Mrs. Elinor Glyn. Here is a passage from the alleged conversation of King Edward VII:

> "I see, László, you are painting my tie. Please notice that it is not a ready-made tie. I arrange it myself, so see that you make that plain in the picture, for no gentleman wears a ready-made tie."
>
> Later, when he saw that I was painting the coat, he said:
>
> "I see that you are going to paint my button. Come nearer, and you will perceive that it is not an ordinary button, but has a very fine ivory inlaid line."

Even the flattery laid on by László was not gross enough to satisfy his aristocratic sitters. "A marquess requested that his jaws and cheeks should be made 'a little less square and full and fat.'" And here is a pleasing vignette:

> The old Duchess of Wellington, always smiling, was saying, "The portrait of the Archbishop may be a great picture, but he never did anything like *mine*"—although I remembered that, when I had painted it ten years ago, Her Grace sent me a reproduction, which she had cleverly touched up to smooth out the hard lines of age, with a note, saying, "This is how the portrait ought to be: do you not wish now to readjust it?"

Mr. Rutter's book incorporates an autobiography dictated by László. He was born in 1869 in humble circumstances in Budapest; we are not told whether he was a Catholic, a Protestant or a Jew, but he was married in a Protestant church. He fell in love with the first English girl he met; she turned out to be a scion of the house of Guinness; he married her; and the straightforward "success-story" that was his life was variegated by only one misfortune. He was granted British nationality in August, 1914, and in 1917 he was interned for disloyalty. He had in fact broken the law, but in a most creditable way, by sending money to his mother in Hungary and by not immediately denouncing an escaped Hungarian prisoner who asked him for help. Most of his sitters rallied to his support, but Lord Northcliffe, whom he had painted, was, like the egregious Bottomley, loud in attacking him. In 1919 he successfully resisted the revocation of his naturalisation, and in 1925 he was further reinstated by an invitation to a garden party at Buckingham Palace. His practice was more flourishing than ever: his most formidable rival, Sargent, died in 1925, and the class for which he catered remained conspicuously unaffected by the widely revived interest in visual art. László died in 1937. From Mr. Rutter's book we gather that he was a lively, amiable, domestic and ingenuous man, untroubled by doubts about his achievement. Was he not a Member of the Victorian Order, a Grand Officer of the Order of St. Charles of Monaco, a Knight of the Order of the White Falcon of Saxe-Weimar? The heirs of his customers are already less complacent: confronted with death-duties, "Poor Mamma," they murmur gloomily, "I should have liked to see her in an American museum. Why couldn't she have had herself painted by Vuillard or Matisse?" Even in the matter of investments, the children of this world are not always wiser than the children of light.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

GRAND TOUR

Henry, Elizabeth and George (1734-80). Letters and Diaries of Henry, Tenth Earl of Pembroke, and his Circle. Edited by LORD HERBERT. *Cape.* 18*s.*

One of the more sinister results of the Romantic Movement was the sentimental glorification of the state of childhood. Right up to the end of the eighteenth century children were still dressed as miniature adults, received in adult company at an early age and generally encouraged to slough off the crysalis. With the growth of Romanticism, a change occurred. The school age was prolonged—at least among the middle and upper classes—to a ridiculously advanced period of adolescence; a special literature was produced for childish reading which emphasised the delights and advantages of remaining a child; children were taught to regard themselves as a race apart, with unusual privileges and a peculiar fascination. Since the average child has a streak of opportunist cunning and is quick to recognise any sign of weakness, modern children have made the most of their new position and have learned to stick to childhood with the whimsical craft of a regiment of Peter Pans. They continue to enjoy the stuffy seclusion of an English public school—from which they emerge into the mild freedom of Oxford or Cambridge—at a time of life when their ancestors were exploring Europe.

What better education than the Augustan grand tour? From the archives of Wilton, Lord Herbert has extracted a mass of papers dealing with the tenth Earl of Pembroke (son of Pope's friend, the famous builder, architect of Wilton's exquisite Palladian bridge), his wife and his son, George Lord Herbert. Not all these documents are equally interesting; for too much material has been resurrected; but for those who know how to skip this is a delightful bedside book. Here is a sketch of the making of a Georgian magnifico. First, the hero's father commands our attention. Of that nobleman, Boswell (who, characteristically enough, was delighted at being asked to visit Wilton but bored to distraction when he had endured such stately retirement for two or three days) once remarked that, just as Astley, the celebrated equestrian performer, "will pick up a handkerchief while riding full speed, so Lord Pembroke, while he gallops through life, catches ideas which one would not suppose he would." His career was certainly headlong, and even scandalous. He had married a charming and good-looking woman; but, some three years after the birth of his son, he had suddenly eloped with a Miss Kitty Hunter, daughter to one of the Lords of the Admiralty. When the affair collapsed, he returned to England, managed to conciliate his wife and retrieve his character—then again he grew restless and

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fled the country, bound for new scandals and new adventures. Lord Herbert describes him as "unfaithful, coarse, bad-tempered . . ."; but there is little in his letters to support that opinion. Towards his wife, his behaviour may not have been kindly; but to his son he was a sensible and good-humoured counsellor.

The young man set out on the grand tour at the age of sixteen. Chosen to accompany him were a broadminded and highly educated clergyman, the Reverend William Coxe, twelve years older than himself, and a dashing cavalry officer, Captain John Floyd, charged with the worldlier side of his education. His parents' parting instructions were extremely detailed. They range from "Avoid drink, gaming, and all improper connections . . ." and "Young French officers the worst of company" to "Butter, and Greasy Trash, thick Cream, etc., disagree cruelly with Ld. Herbert," a suggestion that Lord Herbert, besides acquiring the arts of bleeding a horse and putting on an occasional horseshoe, should learn to dress his own hair, and a reminder that the tips of the hair must be "just cut, without shortening . . . all over," and the whole head greased thoroughly "the 2nd day of every new Moon."

When the cavalcade was on the point of entering Italy, Lord Pembroke threw off several pages of random recommendations, which illustrate the great diversity of his private interests. At Parma, he said, he knew of "nothing half as curious" as the Arch-Duchess. "I had rather see *her* than all the paintings of Coreggio put together." At Bologna, however, art came foremost; there one must see "a thousand fine paintings," and as many at Florence, besides "the superb Chapel where repose the Medicis." "At Terni, in God's name go and see the Cataract of the Nera"; and, while in Naples, one had better be thoroughly classical and take a little journey into the Priapic part. He recollected a diverting group of a goat and a satyr, which was well worth examination if one could obtain a permit!

In agreeable contrast to the stern counsels of perfection with which Lord Chesterfield bombarded poor Philip Stanhope is the friendly, almost pleading tone that Lord Pembroke usually adopted:

> When I lay so much stress on dancing & tennis, it is on account of your figure, & do, pray, my dear George, indulge me in them seriously. Musick will allways amuse you. . . . Do stick to it whilst you are abroad. Drawing, especially from nature, will not only be an entertainment, but of great use to you, particularly in your military profession, which I hope ye will make yourself master of both in theory, & practice, contrary to the ideas of the present red-coated Macaronis.

There is something oddly civilised about the character of this correspondence; and here, as in so many collections of Augustan letters, one is struck by the comparatively urbane relationship that seems to have existed between parents and children before Romantic sentiment and Victorian prejudice had enlarged the breach. . . . *Henry, Elizabeth and George* concludes with some amusing fragments of the diary Lord Herbert kept in Paris—"I have this Evening seen at least 4,000 Women and not one tollerably handsome"; "The King and Monsieur (he was writing on the eve of the Revolution) are very much like Eunuchs in their figure and neither of their countenances forebode much sense. The Queen is handsome and her behaviour excessively indecent." Elaborate appendices devoted to Lord Herbert's expense-accounts do not add greatly to the interest of an amusing volume.

PETER QUENNELL.

THE FOCUS OF DEMOCRACY

Parliament. By W. I. JENNINGS. *Cambridge University Press.* 25*s.*

Within the limits he has imposed upon himself, Dr. Jennings has written a book as useful as it is admirable. In form, it is a description of the actual working of Parliament, a kind of digest of its complicated forms, written with clarity, illustrated with convincing examples, and making the mysteries of Erskine May's formidable tome accessible to the layman. But, in substance, it is more than this. For there emerges from Dr. Jennings' discussion a thesis of vital importance—the argument that the central principle which gives effectiveness to Parliamentary government is the work of the Opposition, and that in its power to destroy a government in office, whether in the House of Commons itself, or by appeal to the country, lies the foundation of democratic institutions. Parliament, so to say, is essentially a talking-shop; but its merits cannot be understood unless it is realised that the alternative to the talking-shop is the concentration-camp.

The book is based on a remarkable knowledge of the material. There is hardly a significant debate or political biography that is not brought under effective contribution. Certainly the reader of this book will be able to put it down with the sense that he has really grasped the way the machine works and the reasons which underlie its rules. It is, I think, a pity that Dr. Jennings has, for the most part, decided rather to describe than to interpret. There are many, and important, problems connected with parliamentary procedure upon which it would have been of great value to have his views in the context of his description. Is the modern predominance of the Cabinet excessive? Has the private member enough to do? What accounts for the success of one kind of "lobby," and the failure of another? How does the "selective" function of the House really work? What explains the mysterious influence of commonplace men like Mr. Walter Long or Lord Bridgman over their fellow-members? These are only examples of the questions I should like to have seen Dr. Jennings, in the light of his massive knowledge, attempt to answer. He has given us an excellent anatomy of Parliament which it will be, I hope, unnecessary to do again for many years; but he has deliberately evaded, regrettably, its physiology. Above all, he has refused to discuss the fundamental issue of whether Parliament can function adequately when the abyss between parties is as wide as, say, it is between the Tory Party and the Communist Party. The result is to convey an impression of a static character in Parliamentary procedure which Dr. Jennings would be the first to deny. Its working, in fact, cannot be separated from the impact upon it of the dynamic influences in the social and economic life of the nation. By refusing the consider these, Dr. Jennings has produced an admirably "objective" study of the kind that is dear to the academic heart. But he has done so by putting on one side all the fighting issues upon the decision of which the future of parliamentary democracy depends.

HAROLD J. LASKI

DOCTOR AND NURSE

Doctor—Here's Your Hat! By JOSEPH A. JERGER. *Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

King's Nurse—Beggar's Nurse. By CATHERINE BLACK. *Hurst and Blackett.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The public is intensely curious about doctors. When they write about their own work, almost everyone is prepared to read them for ever; it would be superfluous to ask why. Usually, though not always, the medical best-seller is a work of fiction; I prefer memoirs, which are at least equally informative, and don't pretend to be art. *Doctor—Here's Your Hat!* though not the most entrancing of its kind, will please every amateur.

Dr. Jerger is an American of English birth. He graduated at Chicago University, shared a country practice for ten years, and then returned to the city. He began with the usual feeling against "hen medics," and married the first he came across. He gives us, not the story of his life, but a string of anecdotes, put together more or less at random. Yet the book has a purpose; one might say that it has two purposes, not steadily enforced, but always liable to crop up. First, he is appalled at the progress of venereal disease, and the State's neglect of it. The figures are horrible. He suggests, in the first place birth control, and secondly, "conscription" and compulsory treatment for the diseased. But what is more, he insists that the whole profession in America must "clean house."

> The conscience of medicine is not keeping pace with the improvement of medical service. . . . The Rosenwald majority report says, in substance, that one-third of the nation receives good medical service, and one-third is compelled to accept poor medical care, and one-third receives either wretched service or none at all. This state of affairs will lead inevitably to state medicine and all its attendant evils.

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specialist, and prefers the dearest specialist he can get. Soon there will be no G.P.s, and then what will happen to the masses? One day, Dr. Jerger was called in to set a broken ankle in a Chicago slum. Everyone in that appalling shack was more or less ill, and he put them all to rights, as far as their situation allowed. "Now if I had complied with the trends, I would have called in an obstetrician, an orthopaedic surgeon, a neurologist, a dermatologist, a pediatrician, a gynaecologist, an otolaryngologist, and an internist." Obviously the patients could not have stood it, could not have afforded it—and after all, they would have been no better off. For he believes the "trend" would be harmful, even if it cost nothing. Research has actually diminished the need to specialise, but it is impossible to do without the G.P.

His views are profusely illustrated from experience, not least from his experience of "Old Doc," with whom he worked in Iowa. What, he says in effect, can the new procedure offer in exchange for a man like that, a wizard of common sense and resourcefulness? To pass judgment, one would require expert knowledge, plus a special knowledge of the United States. But he is extremely convincing, and the best of his grim or funny stories are very good.

King's Nurse—Beggar's Nurse is in a way the same kind of book. It is the story of a career, told in anecdotes with very little art, and it appeals to much the same curiosity. Yet the effect is quite different—for Miss Black describes a vocation. Dr. Jerger has been leading a useful and devoted, but still a competitive and fully active life in the world; and the interest of his book is not chiefly moral. The interest of Miss Black's is overwhelmingly moral. She gives herself no airs, but dedication, renouncement, entire obedience are the very breath of her narrative. This is a book that may inspire girls to take up nursing, simply because the life is so hard.

The stories she can tell are less important, though her service—at the London Hospital, and in France during the war, and with the Royal family—has been unusually varied. I need hardly say she is dullest about the Royal family. Her affection and esteem for them all, especially for King George V, is plainly sincere, but so discreet and uncritical that we are none the wiser. At the best of times, her critical faculty is not strong; she has been trained to defer, and has the habit of admiring those in authority. Where Dr. Jerger finds fault, she sees only progress, and the cures that would have been impossible twenty years ago. Perhaps the war chapters are the best—it is useless to deny that war has its sublime side. On the other hand, there are a few pages on Edith Cavell which make her death seem only the accident unveiling a life of much greater pathos and nobility. K. JOHN

The Furniture Designs of Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton. With an Introduction by Arthur Hayden. *Cresset Press.* 25s.

This American book contains some 240 plates reproducing the furniture designs published by the great eighteenth century cabinet-makers. In quality the reproductions are conspicuously inferior to the original engravings, but the book may be useful to antique-dealers and students who are far from good libraries. The superiority of Chippendale to his successors jumps immediately to the eye. His inventiveness and his feeling for just proportion were extraordinary, and while one may object to some of his Gothic ornamentations, and even reproach him with an undue fondness for fretwork, his furniture is one of the chief achievements of England in the visual arts. French, Dutch and Chinese notions are translated, as it were, into the distinguished language of Gray and Horace Walpole. Hepplewhite is far less original: following the Adam brothers, who themselves copied too liberally the ornaments of Spalato, he produced highly elegant but rather rigid and pedantic designs. Elaborate inlay does not compensate for the loss of movement and freedom. He is a painstaking and refined craftsman rather than an artist. Sheraton died in 1804, but in his work we find already the marks not only of the Regency style but of Victorianism. He was remarkably inventive, but the Grand Manner was petering out, and his hold upon the principles of design was precarious. The grossness and eccentricity of mid-Victorian furniture is foreshadowed in many of his drawings. All three designers produced lovely work, but comparison seems only to emphasise the supremacy of Chippendale.

Science and Everyday Life. By J. B. S. HALDANE. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 5s.

Natural curiosity has so often been blunted by experiences in the school laboratories—the clumsy experiments, the unpleasant smells, the meaningless formulae, and above all, the apparent lack of any connection with reality—that science is frequently regarded as a veiled mystery impenetrable to all except the initiate. Professor Haldane's book is a collection of articles from the *Daily Worker* presenting a number of important scientific facts in a form comprehensible to the layman. No one could be better qualified than he to do this, his style is lucid, he avoids difficult technical terms, and he succeeds above all in bringing the "facts into relation with everyday life." The articles deal with a variety of subjects, including diet, time, astronomy, evolution, and heredity, and contain many interesting and useful bits of information: that filling up cracks and crevices to prepare a refuge room against the entry of poison gas is almost completely useless, that if you suffer from spots and a dry skin you are likely to be deficient in Vitamin A; and that drugs for nearly all purposes can be bought direct from the chemist at a fraction of the cost of the equivalent patent medicine. The only criticism of this excellent book that a layman would be qualified to make is that Professor Haldane indulges in some rather strange contortions at the end of each article to make science toe the party line.

Evolution of Sea Power. Edited by CHARLES W. DOMVILLE-FIFE. *Rich and Cowan.* 18s.

The wealth of expert opinion on the development of naval warfare in recent years, brought together in this volume by a well-known writer on submarines, gives it an exceptional interest and value. But the procedure of splitting up the subject into no less than fifteen different issues, each entrusted to one or several authors and further complicated by numerous critical footnotes, while producing an extremely lively and stimulating exchange of opinion and argument, has made it difficult to see the wood among the trees; for more than two-thirds of the discussion ranges over the technical and tactical aspects of such highly controversial issues as *Influence of Air on Sea Power*, the *Influence of the Submarine on Naval Warfare*, *Anti-Submarine Warfare*, *Capital Ships*, *Gun Power*, *Speed and Armour*. It is only when we come to the very lucid and interesting essay on *Convoys and Oversea Transport*, by E. H. Baxter, Admiral of the Fleet O. de B. Brock and Admiral Sir Sidney Freemantle that the problem of naval war as a whole begins to emerge from the mass of detail, and those difficulties to present themselves which we are facing in the present struggle: the predominance of the protection of sea communications over offensive action: the division of that task between the battle fleet and the convoy forces: their respective functions and problems: the new methods of attack by a combination of aerial and surface forces with submarines; the danger of the "pocket battleship" as a super raider: together with the technical and administrative implications of these problems. The plea for a special "Convoy Force," separate and independent of the "Battle Fleet," is advanced in a thoughtful article by Admiral Sir Barry Domville on *Expansion and Minor Operations in Naval Warfare*, dealing with the raising, training and organisation of the "New Navy" which carried

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 804

through the anti-submarine campaign during the World War and with the incomparably more difficult situation to-day. Amongst the more narrowly technical contributions the same author's article on *The Personal Factor in Naval Warfare*, emphasising the dangers of over-specialisation and of the loss of offensive spirit, stands out by its breezy common sense. Admiral Usborne is particularly interesting on the role of the submarine, predicting a very marked increase in its importance and summing up the rival claims of protection, offensive power and speed. The little appreciated factor of the mine finds a brilliant advocate in Commander Gwynne in an extremely useful analysis of its role during the World War. Despite its highly technical subject the study is remarkably successful in presenting the complicated issues to the general reader, notably the vexed questions of the capital ship, of naval agreements and limitations, and of the oil *v.* coal debate. A number of unusual photographs round off one of the most remarkable and useful publications on naval affairs that have appeared during the last few years.

Right Honourable Gentlemen. By "WATCHMAN." *Hamish Hamilton.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

It is doubtful how far the failure of *Right Honourable Gentlemen* is due to the author and how far to the subject matter. There are obvious possibilities in the idea of describing all the politicians in this country who might possibly become Premier, but "Watchman"—who, one suspects, is a young man without many personal contacts in high places—does not do much with it. No one can fail to make Lloyd George and Winston Churchill interesting, but you need more malice and inside information than "Watchman" possesses to give much life to portraits of Sir John Simon, Mr. Anthony Eden, Mr. Oliver Stanley, Sir Samuel Hoare or even Lord Halifax. The fact is that our National leaders have remarkably little personality; they are interesting as symptoms but not as people, and it is impossible to make them live against the astonishing background of contemporary history because they do not really belong to it. In an Edwardian setting they would be pleasant minor characters; in 1939 they look like stuffed dummies. Mr. Priestley's Cabinet Minister in his new piece at the Westminster is infinitely more alive than any of the present Cabinet either in real life or in *Right Honourable Gentlemen*. Unfortunately, "Watchman" knows little of the Labour leaders. With the exception of Hugh Dalton, of whom he gives a recognisable, if malicious, sketch, he uniformly fails to bring them to life, and sometimes goes wildly wrong. Whatever Mr. Attlee's failings may be it is fantastic to suggest that he would rate intelligence higher than courage or generosity. Stafford Cripps may be forbidding on first acquaintance but he certainly does not "take everyone wholesale into the ice-age."

Income Tax in the Napoleonic Wars. By ARTHUR HOPE-JONES. *Cambridge University Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The special interest of this book lies in the account which it gives of the methods used in improvising a Civil Service department for the purpose of assessing and collecting the income tax first imposed during the French Wars. The returns relating to this tax were long supposed to have been destroyed by order of Parliament when the tax was repealed in 1816, in order that all traces of an expedient so distasteful to the richer taxpayers might be wiped out, and the re-imposition of the tax might be made as difficult as possible. The work of destruction was not, however, after all effectively accomplished; for the duplicate records sent regularly to the King's Remembrancer escaped, to be unearthed more than a century later by Professor Clapham and the author of the present volume. From these records Mr. Hope-Jones has been able to reconstruct a practically complete account of the working of the tax, and to throw most interesting light on a hitherto dark passage in the history of the Civil Service. The central administration was in the hands of the Tax Commissioners set up by Pitt in 1785, and in practice mainly of their energetic secretary, Matthew Winter, to whom Mr. Hope-Jones pays deserved tribute. The organisation throughout the country was not dissimilar to that which exists to-day, with local bodies of Commissioners representing the public, at any rate in theory, and local Surveyors (the House Tax Surveyors with added duties) acting under the orders of the central department. Mr. Hope-Jones gives a careful account of this organisation, and also studies the yield of the tax, both in general from year to year and in different urban and county areas.

BOOKS TO COME

Two interesting volumes are announced for December by His Majesty's Stationery Office. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments has devoted the forthcoming volume of its Inventories to the City and Colleges of Oxford. The volume will comprise a concise historical account and pictorial record of the City of Oxford and will be illustrated by a series of over 200 full-page plates most of which are original photographs taken expressly for the Commission. In addition to the official Report there will be included a Sectional Preface calling attention to particularly interesting examples mentioned in the Inventory; an illustrated Inventory; a list of monuments that the Commissioners have selected as especially worthy of preservation; an armorial of heraldry before 1550; and a glossary of archaeological, architectural and heraldic terms.

The Colonial Empire Marketing Board were responsible for the idea of *The Story of the British Colonial Empire*, but the presentation and views are those of the author, Mr. Douglas Woodruff who was for many years on the staff of the *Times* in the Imperial and Foreign Department. The book is illustrated by Ralph Mott with nine colour plates by Lander.

The Stationery Office has just published a short history of mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology intended for the general reader, under the title, *Science Since* 1500. The author is Mr. H. T. Pledge of the Science Museum, South Kensington.

W. G. Krivitsky is the author of *I Was Stalin's Agent*, coming from Hamish Hamilton on December 4th. Mr. Krivitsky's late official position as Chief of the Soviet Military Intelligence in Western Europe enables him to tell the inside story of recent developments in Russia. Krivitsky was for fourteen years in the Military Intelligence Department and was Director of the Soviet War Industries Institute from 1933–34. He broke with Stalin in November, 1937, after the Purges.

The memoirs of a Victorian child who encountered many celebrities of the period will be published by Robert Hale on December 4th under the title, *Four to Fourteen*. The child composed them when she was ten, the first part being written from her recollections.

Michael Barsley's verse parodies which are familiar to wireless listeners will be published by Murray early in December with the title *Grabberwocky and Others*.

'Twas Danzig and the Swastikoves
Did heil and hittle in the Reich

will be generally remembered. Mr. Osbert Lancaster has provided suitable illustrations.

Werner Laurie announces for publication early this month *The Soldiers' English-German Conversation Book* (price 9*d.*) which will contain hundreds of useful sentences and words with pronunciation. This firm has just published *The Soldiers' War Slang Dictionary*, a list of the words and phrases used by British soldiers in the last war.

Useful economy hints are given in *Wartime Cookery* by Mrs. Arthur Webb, coming from Dent on December 13th. Mrs. Webb has already broadcast advice on this subject. She here gives practical directions for making the best use of the food and fuel available.

At the end of December, Gollancz will publish *The Socialist Sixth of the World*, by the Dean of Canterbury, which is intended to present a contrasting point of view to that expressed by Mr. Leonard Woolf in *Barbarians at the Gate*.

Cape announces for December 15th *Speak to the Earth*, a new volume of poems by Andrew Young.

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

"SMALLS" RATES: 3d. a word for single insertions, 4d, for words in CAPS (except the first). Lines in CAPS 1s. 9d. Series discounts 5% for 3 insertions, 10% for 13, 15% for 26, 20% for 52. Minimun 12 words. Box Number 1s extra. Box No. replies should be addressed "Box No. . . ." C/o N.S. & N. 10 Great Turnstile, Holborn, W.C.1. All small advertisements must be prepaid and copy should arrive by Tuesday. NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

Week-end Competitions

No. 512

Set by John Ramage

Professor Harold Laski has written a book entitled *The Danger of Being a Gentleman*. The usual prizes are offered for passages of not more than 200 words from a book of that title by any one of the following: Thurber, J. B. S. Haldane, Cyril Connolly, Billie ("almost a gentleman") Bennett, Clive Bell, Winston Churchill, Harold Nicolson, William Hickey, Jan (Mrs. Miniver) Struther, Mark Benney.

RULES—

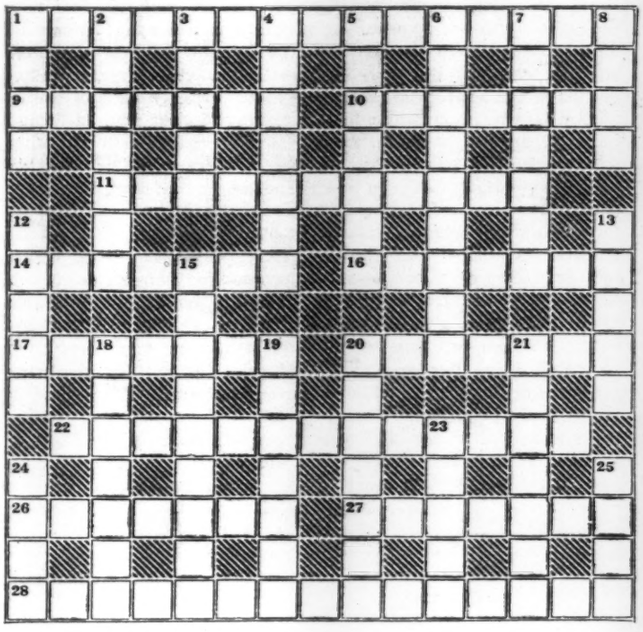
1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, December 8th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

The Report on Competition No. 510, set by Robinson Moody, cannot appear, because the entries fell from the setter's bicycle between this office and his home. He apologises most humbly, and hopes that contributors have kept copies of their verses and will send them in by Friday, December 8th.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 508

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Mrs. B. G. Last, 111 Copse Hill, S.W.20

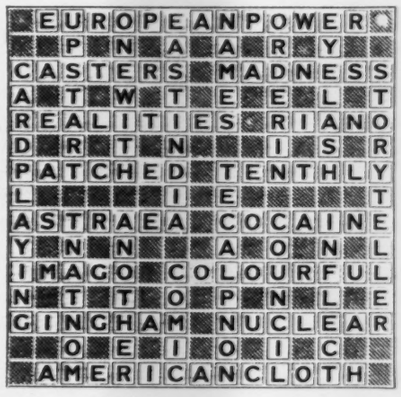
ACROSS

1. They are not gummed in, but on. (15)
9. Painful for the hearers. (7)
10. One might use one's fingers to do it if unemployed. (7)
11. Relative dancing girls? (11)
14. Best form of defences. (7)
16. A vicarious undertaker. (7)
17. Extremely short cut for the sheepdog. (7)
20. Nowadays usually leads to "reports" of shelling. (7)
22. A petty existence of course. (13)
26. Does he shoe the heavenly hosts? (7)
27. Odd kind of Southern Railway agent. (7)
28. They usually stop to play on the way. (15)

DOWN

1. How mad Malays run. (4)
2. A heavenly crossing. (7)
3. Its subjects are partly taken up. (5)
4. It supports the body. (7)
5. Model often put on paper. (7)
6. Spiritual description of Siamese twins? (9)
7. Old suit—for the Serpentine. (7)
8. You can't get away with it paired if dirty. (4)
12. They will become wool growers when grown up. (5)
13. The Shade of Lincoln. (5)
15. Fruit tart, so to speak. (9)
18. Possible source of coals of fire to heap on your enemy's head. (7)
19. Made by the man, Laud, but not by the archbishop. (7)
20. Grumbles on Aug. 12? (7)
21. A fan ain't feminine in Spanish. (7)
23. Where Cyril goes to play. (5)
24. The doings. (4)
25. A minus quantity no doubt. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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V193

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Contributions should be sent to
The General Secretary

FRIENDS SERVICE COUNCIL
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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

KEYNES, SIMON AND THE GILT-EDGED MARKET—HOME RAILWAY HOPES—GOLD SHARES

CASSANDRA KEYNES, disappointed by the reception of his compulsory savings plan, declares that the country is not taking its financial problem seriously and is still unaware of the sacrifices to be demanded and of the financial wrath to come. It is a pity that his scheme should have been proposed at a time when we are too aware of the unemployment created by the Simon-budget slump. As Mr. Keynes observes, the need for compulsory savings will be seen when we are straining our physical resources to the utmost, and so far, thanks to failures in organisation, our national output is scarcely greater after three months of war than it was before the war began. So we can remain for the time being in the Cloud-Cuckoo-Land of financial plenty and pretend that we shall win through with the help of voluntary savings and the old school tie. The new 3 per cent. Defence Bonds are indeed selling fairly well, but why should not the Treasury appeal to local patriotism by issuing Scottish or Welsh bonds? There would be a scramble in Scotland for a 2½ per cent. bond under par. The Treasury, having tightened up the control of capital issues (see its new regulations of last week) seems confident of forcing up the gilt-edged market if only because the other outlets for investment money are being steadily blocked. The short supply of good debenture stocks and preference shares on the London Stock Exchange amounts almost to a famine. Brokers prowl round jobbers every day like hungry wolves and the morsels of stock which the jobbers can throw to them do nothing to satisfy their investment appetites. The scene is being set for the first issue of the City loan in the course of December. To wait till January is dangerous in view of the then deadly activities of the tax gatherers.

* * *

A mild excitement of the week has been a spurt in the junior stocks of the home railways on somewhat wild reports of the impending compensation. The only definite fact is that negotiations between the Government and the railway executives are proceeding and that when a decision has been arrived at it will be announced. At the moment there are only rumours and these are contradictory. First, there is the rumour that the Government cannot offer the railways less favourable terms than a guarantee of their average net earnings for the years 1936-37-38. The executives would not be particularly pleased at the inclusion of the year 1938, which was an abnormally bad one, or at the exclusion of the eight months of 1939 during which there was a rapid recovery. The second rumour is that the Government will not guarantee any net earnings but will pay for actual Government traffics carried at the appropriate rates and scales for each class of traffic. This would be much worse for the railways and, if realised, would cause an immediate slump in the railway market. On the other hand, if the first rumour proved correct, there might be a further rise in the market. Consider how the scheme would work out for the marginal stocks. On the average net profits for 1936-37-38 there would be available about £1,975,000 for the dividend on London, Midland, and Scottish 1923 preference stock which requires only £1,600,000, about £1,970,000 for London and North Eastern 4 per cent. first preference and 5 per cent. redeemable preference stocks which require £2,129,627, about £1,087,500 for Great Western ordinary stock which would be equivalent to a dividend of 2½ per cent. and about £1,545,620 for Southern preferred ordinary stock which requires £1,379,330. The following table gives the present market prices of these marginal stocks, the possible dividends on the amounts available on the basis of 1936–38 average net earnings and the potential yields:

		Potential Div. %	Yield %
L.M. & S. 1923 Pf.	39	4	10 5 0
L.N.E. 4% 1st Pref.	33½	3½	10 9 0
G. West Ordy.	30	2½	8 6 9
Southern Pfd. Ordy	64	5	7 16 3

If I had to guess I would work on the first rumour but I would not take a gamble in the home railway market except after a reaction on a thoroughly bad day. The war news is sure to give us such an opportunity from time to time.

* * *

An old investment rule was to buy gold shares whenever sterling was in danger of depreciation. Well, since the outbreak of war, sterling has fallen from 4.68 to 4.00 and the price of gold has risen from 148*s.* 6*d.* to 168*s.* per oz. But gold shares are lower. This is explained partly by forced liquidation of a varied sort and partly by investment disgust at the decision of the South African Government to appropriate any excess in the price of gold over 150*s.* per ounce, subject to a producers' allowance in respect of a material rise in costs. This disgust was vehemently expressed by the chairman of the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company last week. The prosperity of South Africa, he declared, was due entirely to the increase in the price of gold which had brought millions of tons of ore into payability and had enabled the industry to expand vastly the scale of its operations. If the price of gold had remained at 85*s.* per ounce the Rand to-day would be operating at the rate of 20 million tons per annum instead of 57 million tons. To limit now the price of gold to 150*s.* will make all ore between 2.3 dwts. and 2.57 dwts. per ton unpayable. It will retard operations and raise costs. Further, a 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. rise in costs threatens the existence of low-grade mines. Although I do not particularly like the long-term prospects of South African gold shares, being nervous of "gold scares" after the war, I would advise the investor to keep to the high-grade or medium-grade mines, such as:

	Price	Annual Div.	Gross Div. Yield, %*
Sub-Nigel, 10/-	10 1/16	15/-	£8 11 6
Brakpan, 5/-	2 1/32	3/6	£8 3 9
Daggafontein, 5/-	1 5/8	2/7½	£7 19 0
Grootvlei, £1	4 3/16	2/-	£2 7 0

* After allowing for Dominion income tax relief.

Sub-Nigel has the highest-grade ore (around 14 dwts.) of this selection, but developments at the mine are sometimes patchy. The others have reserves around 6 dwts. Brakpan has an interest in the new mine of South African Land and Exploration and Daggafontein an interest in East Daggafontein which should begin dividends next year. The inclusion of Grootvlei with such a low running yield needs justification. It is a developing mine and as the capacity is increased, so will the dividends. Next year 4*s.* a share should be paid, and ultimately 8*s.* or 10*s.* per share. The company is managed by Union Corporation, which is another mark in its favour.

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OUR GRIP ON THE WAR AGAINST CANCER

The Royal Cancer Hospital must be victorious in its fight against this dread disease. Although a number of organisations have decided to suspend activities the work of TREATMENT and RESEARCH at The Royal Cancer Hospital will continue unabated throughout the War.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, December 3rd, at 11 a.m., JOHN KATZ, B.A.: "THE FATE OF HOMO SAPIENS." Admission free. Visitors welcome.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning service only. Sunday, December 3rd, at 11, DR. A. M. WAGNER: "WHAT AMERICA THINKS OF EUROPEAN CULTURE."

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

ADVISORY SERVICE ON BOARDING SCHOOLS: the offices of CICELY C. WRIGHT Ltd. have been transferred from London to 4, York Road, Headington, OXFORD. Tel. 6612. Schools in 'safe' areas recommended without charge.

BYRON HOUSE SCHOOL, The Orchard, Huntingdon Road, CAMBRIDGE (formerly of Highgate Village, N.6) is established as a co-educational preparatory boarding and day school for children, 3–13 years. Particulars from Secretary. Cambridge 3817. A class is also open for children in London at 5 North Grove, Highgate. MOU. 6403.

PINEHURST HOME SCHOOL, GOUDHURST, Kent. Co-education 3 to 12 years. Food reform diet. Sunbathing, Riding. MISS M. B. REID, Goudhurst 116.

HALSTEAD PLACE, Sevenoaks (recognised preparatory) has moved to "a'Beckett's," Littleton Panell, WILTSHIRE, for duration of the war. 18 acres. Ages 7–14. After Christmas, girls only.

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THE BELTANE SCHOOL has now joined its Country Branch at Shaw Hill, Melksham, Wilts. 180 boys and girls already in residence. Room for more at all ages. Own farm produce. School work proceeding without interruption.

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Head Mistress: MISS B. M. BAKER, B.A.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, 16 Wedderburn Road, N.W.3, has re-opened for the time being at: Sunnydale, Torcross, Nr. Kingsbridge, S. Devon. Torcross 254. Usual staff retained, boys and girls at all ages from 4–14. Fine airy house on the shore in safe neighbourhood. The Principal: MRS. E. PAUL, Ph.D.

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Application Forms and further particulars may be obtained from the Registrar, College of Art, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh, 3. The last day for receiving applications is 31st January, 1940.

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APPOINTMENT OF SUB-LIBRARIAN
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Applicants must be University graduates and must submit evidence of special qualifications and experience in librarianship. The Sub-Librarian will be required, as part of his duties, to assist in teaching for courses of instruction in librarianship conducted by the University.
Applications (three copies) must reach the Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2 (from whom forms of application and further particulars may be obtained) not later than the 31st December, 1939.

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